



European Impro Intensive 2013

Report of the ERASMUS Intensive Programme *Improvisation in European Higher Music Education: Improving Artistic Development and Professional Integration*

30 October – 8 November 2013

Royal Conservatoire The Hague

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Introduction

This edition was the culmination of a three-year project initiated by the Royal Conservatoire in 2011, bringing together more than 60 students and around 40 teachers from many different countries across the globe over the entire project period. This year's edition even saw participation from Japan in addition to the American connection developed during the second edition, which this time was made possible with the kind support of the American Embassy. The increased international interest in this project reflects the relevance of the project's subject: improvisation in classical music.

Even before this third edition started, one can already consider what an amazing journey the project has been. It has put the spotlights on an issue that in many conservatoires is still to be found in the dark corners of the curriculum, but which at the same time has the capacity to have an enormous impact on the artistic and technical development of young musicians. It has provided a wonderful (some even called it a life-changing) experience to students. It has built up an international community of experts in the field, all high-level artists that did not always know each other before this project started. And it has given institutions an unprecedented insight into curriculum and pedagogical approaches.

It is interesting to follow the educational and artistic development of the project over the years. Whereas the first edition in January 2012 was mainly focused on improvisation training and how to teach improvisation, and the second edition in February 2013 on the dissemination of improvisation throughout the entire community of the Royal Conservatoire, during the third edition the ensembles have, following an initial preparatory period at the beginning of the intensive, delved deeper into improvisation approaches and styles with the aim to develop artistic results of the highest quality that were presented at the final concert. A remarkable international team of teachers was assembled to coach the development of the ensembles.

However, a challenge lays ahead once this project is finished. What kind of impact will it really have on the curricula of our institutions? How do we continue with this unique cooperation and exchange of expertise? It is clear that, even with this third edition giving us a temporary 'comma' with the ERASMUS funding coming to its end, there is still much more to be done and ways will need to be found to make this possible.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all students and professors for taking the time to come to The Hague for this unique event. Furthermore, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Karst de Jong, Bert Mooiman, Rolf Delfos, Gerda van Zelm, Johannes Boer, Wouter Turkenburg, Susanne van Els en Renee Jonker for their tireless support to this project. Many thanks should also be extended to the excellent organizing team, Irina Bedicova and Else van Ommen. Finally, a sincere word of gratitude should be extended to the ERASMUS programme and the ERASMUS National Agency for generously supporting this project over the years.

Martin Prchal, vice-principal Royal Conservatoire The Hague

Rationale of the project

This project wants to contribute to improving the artistic development and employability of future music graduates by improving the artistic, pedagogical and entrepreneurial dimension of professional music studies, as a response to the rapidly changing employment situation in the music profession.

The music profession is undergoing rapid developments due to changes in the role of music in society at large. Examples of these developments are an increased interest in diverse musical styles by music listeners and a decrease of state support to the arts in general. As a consequence, where music training mainly prepared for a rather structured employment market with orchestras and music schools in the past, the future music profession will be needing musicians that are highly versatile in terms of musical styles, working methods and professional contexts.

This ERASMUS Intensive Project seeks to address this complex situation by addressing the theme of improvisation in higher music education because of the following reasons:

- **Improvisation and artistic development** – there is an increased understanding that improvisation can be very effective in the training of any musician, and not just in the fields of jazz and early music. Improvisation can liberate musicians from written text and the technical restrictions of their musical instruments, which will improve their instrumental skills, musical understanding and freedom of expression.
- **Improvisation and employability** – whereas in the past musicians were able to focus on one particular musical style, future musicians will need to increase their employability by offering a varied menu of skills and knowledge to employers, including the ability to perform in ensembles and activities with different musical styles. These musical styles will include styles that use strong elements of improvisation, such as early music and jazz.
- **Improvisation as a pedagogical tool** – another important professional context in which future music professionals will be increasingly active, is the realisation of educational workshops in varied societal contexts (e.g. schools, retirement homes and community centres). Improvisation can serve as a powerful tool to develop pedagogical approaches for such workshops that include strong participatory elements for the audience. When used in an appropriate way, improvisation can enable musicians through simple schemes and exercises to engage audiences in the workshop in an active way.
- **Improvisation and entrepreneurship** – in order to be able to realise the workshops described in the previous point, musicians will need to increase their organisational and leadership skills, acting as true self-reliant entrepreneurs. This reflects the above-mentioned changes in the music profession, in which the number of permanent employment contracts is radically decreasing and musicians are increasingly active as self-employed workers. As a result, it will not suffice to address improvisation from a purely musical point of view: in order to complete the picture, issues such as the employment context and the entrepreneurial skills of the future musician will need to be addressed as well.

Report of the October/November 2013 Edition of the ERASMUS Intensive Programme

This three-year project aims at bringing students, teachers and leading experts together from different musical backgrounds and European higher music education institutions to exchange information on new and effective approaches and methods on the teaching of improvisation, both from an artistic and pedagogical as well as a professional integration point of view.

The following institutions participate in this project: Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Sibelius Academy Helsinki, Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, National University of Music Bucharest, Koninklijk Conservatorium Antwerpen, Norwegian Academy of Music Oslo, Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe, Royal College of Music Stockholm, Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Conservatoire de Paris and the Royal Conservatoire The Hague (coordinating institution).

The third edition of the project was implemented in line with the original and the renewal applications. As was mentioned in relation to the first project edition, the original idea (which in itself was quite innovative and perhaps somewhat unusual) of combining improvisation and employability worked very well once again. Also in this third and last edition, the first half of the project saw an intensive schedule in which students learned to improvise with the help of the teachers present, whereas in the second half of the project, the student improvisation ensembles were then prepared for context-related presentations, in which they were asked to lead an improvisation workshop themselves with external participants, mainly other students in the Royal Conservatoire that were participating in the IP. By staging these context-related presentations, the relevance of the project was taken to another level: from learning students how to improvise to learn students how to lead improvisation workshops themselves. As a result, the objectives in relation to pedagogy, employability, and entrepreneurship were reached as well.

However, the third edition also saw an important change compared to the first two editions, which was based on discussions about artistic-pedagogical considerations during and following the second edition. It was felt by the participating teachers that a more in-depth approach to the various types of improvisation, as well as trying to connect to the role of improvisation in current professional concert practice was to be further explored. Even if the original purpose of the project to connect improvisation with issues on employability and entrepreneurship was supported by all, the opinion was also shared that it was essential not to lose sight of artistic considerations, as it was clear that by now this ERASMUS IP was increasingly being perceived by many in the international higher music education scene as well the professional music scene at large as an initiative that was taking a leadership role in this field.

As a result, the schedule of the project was somewhat adjusted into two sections: the first gave the students the possibility to do improvisation workshops with different teachers so that they could get acquainted with basic improvisation principles but also experience different forms of improvisation. After this first initial project phase, they were given a choice of strands with different kinds of improvisation. These strands included:

1. Tonal/classical improvisation
2. Free Improvisation
3. Improvisation with electronics
4. Improvisation with theatrical elements
5. Melodic improvisation

Especially the strands with electronics and theatrical elements were new and challenging approaches that were identified during the second project edition and that were perceived as being very important for making a connection to certain innovative musical and artistic professional realities, which use new technologies and cross-over approaches to experiment with new ways of

artistic expression. Interestingly, these strands were some of the most popular among students and also added a further multidisciplinary dimension to the project.

This resulted in a fascinating range of final performances, in which students presented their work in the various strands. Furthermore, students were also asked to do some of the context-related workshops with students that were not part of the project. This way, the students were able to develop their skills in giving improvisation workshops themselves and also ensure that the results of the project would be disseminated beyond the participating group of students and teachers.

When looking at the progress made by the third edition of the project compared to the first and the second editions, the following points can be mentioned:

- In terms of content, several important artistic-pedagogical decisions were made as described above. This broadened the concept of improvisation of the students, but also changed their views in relation to professional integration, as classical music students will increasingly need to engage with other artistic contexts as part of the professional practice in their future.
- In terms of continuing professional development of teaching staff, it was already mentioned in previous report how noticeable it was that the pool of teachers participating in this IP is being strongly impacted by this project. As anticipated in the renewal application, the number of teachers from the partner institutions increased once again, with the remaining teachers being from the host institution. A majority of the teachers was similar to those during the first and second editions, but with the addition of a number of teachers from specialized areas other than classical music, a higher level of exchange of expertise was achieved. It was also important to observe that a European improvisation community is emerging that is keeping in contact in between projects through ERASMUS staff exchanges and reciprocal invitations to performances and festivals in the field of improvisation. This is significant, as most of the teachers participating in the project had never met before.
- In terms of curriculum development, the project continues to have clear implications for the study programmes of the participating institutions. Obligatory improvisation modules for classical music students are being developed in The Hague, Stockholm, Bucharest and Helsinki, existing modules in Barcelona, Paris, London and Luzern are being further developed. In most cases the development of these modules are involving IP teaching staff that are brought in for short teaching assignment through ERASMUS. Connections have also been made to research projects in the field of improvisation that are currently taking place in London, Vienna, Helsinki, The Hague and Luzern, with researchers from these projects being present during the IP to observe the activities and discuss issues with students and teachers. It is anticipated that a further development of European cooperation in this field will take place in future activities in the new ERASMUS+ programme (see below for further information).
- In terms of internationalization, the project was visited for the second time by an improvisation specialist from the US. This expert, who teaches improvisation at the Juilliard School in New York and the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia (two top conservatoires in the US), brought the project an international dimension in addition to its already strong European dimension, as well as expertise that was helpful for the discussions and performances. This expert was also invited to write up his observations as an external evaluator. Furthermore, this international dimension was further enhanced by the presence of an improvisation expert from Japan, who came specifically to The Hague to observe the project. Further evidence of the international reach of the project was given by a brief presentation given about the project during a session on innovative teaching approaches at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).
- A strong multidisciplinary approach was evident in this project within the field of music itself by bringing different styles of music together each with their own approach to improvisation, but also by adding the additional components of new electronics, cross-over theatrical elements and entrepreneurship and employability.

The innovative character of this project can be demonstrated through the following factors:

1. Even if the higher music education sector in Europe is increasingly aware of the changing professional context and the potential that improvisation offers, evidence shows (e.g. the study 'Dialogue in Music' on the connection between training and the music profession exercised by the European Association of Conservatoires in 2008) that very few higher music education institutions have so far developed expertise in the field of improvisation that goes beyond the usual users of improvisation (e.g. jazz musicians).
2. Improvisation in higher music education has never been addressed at European level in this intensive way before. By pooling the expertise that exists in some higher music education institutions in the various European countries, the exchange of information and the development of expertise will be much more profound. It is this European dimension that gives the project an important added value, which could never be achieved through a similar initiative at national level.
3. Another innovative aspect of this project is its approach to address the subject from both a content and a professional integration point of view.

As can be seen in the project programme, the project used the following pedagogical and didactical approaches:

- Large group lectures took place during the project on general improvisation skills through demonstrations and master class-type learning settings, and leadership and guiding skills through hands-on sessions in preparation of the artistic presentations.
- Small scale workshops took place aimed at exploring improvisation approaches in small musical ensembles (4-7 students), which were formed during the first day of the project. These small music ensembles also held rehearsals to prepare the final artistic presentations through peer-learning and coaching.
- The participating students were also encouraged to reserve time for individual practice to keep up their instrumental and vocal skills throughout the Intensive Programme.
- Concerts were given by the participating teachers to demonstrate their artistic vision on improvisation.
- Final artistic presentations took place in and outside the host institution at the end of the Intensive Programme. The aim of these final presentations was to create an environment that is very close to the future professional reality of the students. One of the ambitions of this Intensive Programme was therefore to facilitate the organisation of artistic presentations in the community in the host institution with the attendance of an external audience.
- A dissemination seminar was organised at the beginning of the project, which gave the participating institutions the possibility to present views on the position and role of improvisation in current professional music practice. This led to a fascinating day, which saw several external speakers, each explaining how improvisation was shaping their professional performance practice and how it positively influences their relationship to the audience.

The target group in terms of student participation for the third edition of this Intensive Programme were, as was the case in the first and second editions, students in the field of classical music, in which improvisation is less common when compared to other musical styles. The selection of the students was the responsibility of the participating institution, with the only requirement being a high instrumental and musical standard, so that students were able to relate to the theme of improvisation based on an existing solid foundation of instrumental and vocal skills. As standards can vary from institution to institution and programme to programme, the participation was not limited to students at a certain degree level, although most of the students were 4th year Bachelor or Master students. In terms of the teaching staff, teachers participated that either have already developed substantial expertise in the field of improvisation and are acting as internationally renowned experts in this area or teachers who were seeking further professional development in the field of improvisation with the aim to enhance their own teaching practice.

As in previous editions of this project, the impact on the people involved seemed to be quite profound. Some quotes from the reactions from the students and teachers during the final evaluation session:

"it is very precious to gather people from different institutions, with different musical backgrounds together and connect them through improvisation"

"we learned to play while relaying on our instinct instead of thinking too much before playing, to accept ideas of others and to listen to each other really well"

"we got a broader view on music and how to make music"

"we got rid of fear, gaining confidence in and through improvisation"

"we met wonderful people and great and inspiring teachers"

"what did the teachers learn during this project? You learn those things you want to learn, being here confirmed that being an improvisation teacher is much more than just gaining knowledge, it is about spending time. Improvisation is life itself!"

For the teachers and institutions involved, the project provided a perfect platform for getting acquainted with other approaches in teaching and learning in improvisation, as it turned out that most of the teachers involved were working in a situation of considerable isolation. It felt like a true inspiration to the teachers having the opportunity to discuss issues with their colleagues from other countries. As mentioned above, one can observe that a European improvisation community is emerging that is keeping in contact in between projects through ERASMUS staff exchanges and reciprocal invitations to performances and festivals in the field of improvisation. This is significant, as most of the teachers participating in the project had never met before.

As important spin-offs, plans continued to be made for ERASMUS staff exchanges between teachers for the academic year 2013-2014. Furthermore, several partner institutions are currently developing new modules on the basis of the information gained in the IP. For the 2013-2014 academic year, the Royal Conservatoire has implemented a new joint module on improvisation for Master students on the basis of contacts that were developed during the Intensive Programme with the Guildhall School and the Estonian Academy of Music. Another important spin-off will be the further development of the cooperation between the participating schools in this field in the new ERASMUS+ programme.

In terms of dissemination of the project results, several important goals were achieved:

- A short film was produced of the third edition, which gives a good overview of the activities and the rationale of the project. This film can be seen at www.koncon.nl/ii
- The publication 'Improvisation? Just do it!' that was published in English by the host institution with a full narrative report of the first edition of the IP, was widely disseminated with the assistance of the European Association of Conservatoires (AEC)
- Presentations were held about the project during international conferences of the AEC in September 2013 (Antwerp) and November 2013 (Palermo), during which information about the project was given to delegates from all over the world. Furthermore, a brief presentation was given about the project during a session on innovative teaching approaches at the Annual Meeting 2013 of the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) in the US, where the above mentioned publication was also distributed
- The special project website that was constructed for the first project edition was expanded with further information about the project: www.koncon.nl/ii. Here information about the project and all participants can be found, including a series of photos that were taken during the project, as well as the various articles that were published.
- Social media were also used, with photos, comments and video footage being uploaded on a Facebook page that was specifically opened for this project and that is still very active: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/176085672492838/>

Programme Erasmus Impro Intensive November 2013

Wednesday 30 October

- 13.00 Welcome Desk open (first floor, next to A. Schoenberg hall)
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00 Opening session in A. Schoenberg hall
- 15.00-18.00 Short workshops to get to know each other: The students will be divided in 5 groups and teachers will go from one group to another to work with all the students.
(1:15.00h, 2:15.30h, 3:16.00h, break: 16.30h, 4:17.00h, 5:17.30h, end: 18.00h)
- 18.00 Teachers' meeting to make 7 groups
- 18.30 Dinner
- 20.00 Opening Night (A. Schoenberg hall)
(students are asked to bring their instruments)

Teachers present: Hervé Sellin, David Dolan, Bert Mooiman, Ernst Reijseger, Karst de Jong, Paul Dinneweth, Rolf Delfos, Teemu Kide, Mona Julsrud, Juan de la Rubia

Thursday 31 October

- 09.30 Kick-off with all students and teachers; Announcing 7 groups. Students stay in their group for 2 days. The teachers will change each block.
- 10.00-12.00 Workshops
- 12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00-16.00 Workshops
- 16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
- 17.30 Dinner
- 19.00-21.00 Demo lecture on tonal improvisation by Karst de Jong + lecture/performance by Hervé Sellin

Teachers present: Hervé Sellin, David Dolan, Paul Dinneweth, Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Teemu Kide, Mona Julsrud, Juan de la Rubia, Rolf Delfos

Friday 1 November

- 10.00-12.00 Workshops
- 12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
- 13.00 Lunch
- 14.00-16.00 Workshops
- 16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
- 17.30 Dinner
- 19.00-21.00 CD presentation concert Anto Pett and Christoph Baumann + performance Agustí Fernández

Teachers present: Hervé Sellin, David Dolan, Paul Dinneweth, Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman, Agustí Fernández, Max Tabell, Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim (from afternoon), Karst de Jong, Anto Pett (from afternoon), Juan de la Rubia, Rolf Delfos, Mona Julsrud, Christoph Baumann (from afternoon), Claron McFadden (only evening)

Saturday 2 November

- 10.00-17.30 Seminar: *The current situation of improvisation in classical music performance practice*. (Studio 1)
13.00-14.00 Lunch
17.30 Dinner (teachers will have a separate dinner/meeting)

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Max Tabell, Horia Maxim, Mona Julsrud, David Dolan, Agustí Fernández, Hervé Sellin, Anto Pett, Christoph Baumann, Paul Dinneweth, Yves Senden, Arne Forsén, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Claron McFadden (only afternoon)

Sunday 3 November

- 11.00-13.00 Evaluation with students and teachers (Studio 1)
13.00-13.30 Short presentation teachers introducing the themes of next week's groups. Students can choose a theme: Tonal improvisation (2 groups), Free improvisation (2 groups), Improvisation with electronics, Theatrical improvisation, Melodic improvisation. The groups will stay together for 4 days to work towards the final presentation on Thursday evening. Each group will have different teachers.
13.30-14.30 Lunch; (Students give their preferences for which group they want to join)
14.30-15.30 Demo-lecture on tonal improvisation Noam Sivan (Studio 1)
15.30 Announcing groups for the second week
16.00 Departure students for Korzo Theater
17.00 Lecture/workshop Kudsi Erguner in Korzo (Turkey, Ottoman music and the instrument 'Nay')
18.30 Arabic food dinner
20.00 Concert Korzo (Salon Joussour)

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Max Tabell (until 13.00), Horia Maxim, Mona Julsrud, David Dolan, Agustí Fernández, Hervé Sellin, Anto Pett, Christoph Baumann, Paul Dinneweth, Noam Sivan (from afternoon) Arne Forsén, Karst de Jong

Monday 4 November

- 10.00-12.00 Workshops in 7 groups: Tonal (2 x), Free (2 x), Electronics, Theatrical, Melodic
12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
13.00 Lunch
14.00-16.00 Workshops in 7 groups
16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
17.30 Dinner
19.00-21.00 Concert: *Tonal impro night*

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim, Mona Julsrud, David Dolan, Leslie-Anne Lewis, Agustí Fernández (until lunch), Anto Pett, Christoph Baumann, Paul Dinneweth (until lunch), Noam Sivan, Arne Forsén, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Rolf Delfos, Richard Barrett, Anka Kozelj (10.00-12.00)

Tuesday 5 November

10.00-12.00 Workshops in 7 groups: Tonal (2 x), Free x (2 x), Electronics, Theatrical, Melodic
12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
13.00 Lunch
14.00-16.00 Workshops in 7 groups
16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
17.30 Dinner
19.00-21.00 Demo lecture by David Dolan: *Improvisation as a meeting point between intuition, spontaneity and structural, (harmonic and stylistic) knowledge*

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim, Mona Julsrud, David Dolan, Leslie-Anne Lewis, Anto Pett (except evening), Christoph Baumann, Noam Sivan, Arne Forsén, Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Rolf Delfos, Richard Barrett

Wednesday 6 November

10.00-12.00 Workshops in 7 groups
12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
13.00 Lunch
14.00-16.00 Workshops
16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
17.30 Dinner
19.00-21.00 Concert + open stage

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim, Terje Moe Hansen, David Dolan, Leslie-Anne Lewis, Vincent le Quang, Christoph Baumann, Noam Sivan, Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Richard Barrett.

Thursday 7 November

10.00-12.00 Workshops in 7 groups
12.00-13.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
13.00 Lunch
14.00-16.00 Workshops
16.00-17.00 Time for rehearsals/meetings
17.30 Dinner
19.00 Final concert: presentation of all groups

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim, Terje Moe Hansen, David Dolan, Leslie-Anne Lewis, Vincent le Quang, Christoph Baumann, Noam Sivan (until lunch), Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman (only afternoon), Karst de Jong, Rolf Delfos, Richard Barrett, Anka Kozelj, Claron McFadden (only afternoon)

Friday 8 November

11.00 Evaluation
13.00 Lunch
14.00-17.00 Workshop Claron McFadden
18.00 Dinner and Goodbye

Teachers present: Teemu Kide, Horia Maxim, Terje Moe Hansen, David Dolan, Leslie-Anne Lewis, Vincent le Quang, Ernst Reijseger, Bert Mooiman, Karst de Jong, Anka Kozelj, Claron McFadden (only afternoon)

"IMPROVISATION AND TODAY'S CONCERT PRACTICE"

Seminar ERASMUS Improvisation Intensive, Saturday 2 November 2013

Koninklijk Conservatorium, Studio 1

- 10:00 * Musical introduction by students participating in the ERASMUS Improvisation Intensive
 * Welcome and introduction by Martin Prchal (Koninklijk Conservatorium), chair of the day
- 10:15 "Improvisation and Identity – a biographical perspective". Lecture by Dr. Rineke Smilde on improvisation and artistic identity of professional musicians
- 11:30 Musical intermezzo by students participating in the ERASMUS Improvisation Intensive
- 11:45 *Coffee break*
- 12:15 Presentation and demonstration by Scroll Ensemble
- 13:00 *lunch*
- 13:45 Musical intermezzo by students participating in the ERASMUS Improvisation Intensive
- 14:00 Presentation and demonstration by Hervé Sellin
- 14:45 Presentation and demonstration by David Kweksilber en Guus Janssen
- 15:30 *break*
- 16:00 Presentation and demonstration by Agustí Fernández
- 16:45 Presentation and demonstration by Claron McFadden and David Dolan
- 17:30 Roundtable with presenters and students chaired by Martin Prchal
- 18:00 Reception

Report Public Seminar European Impro Intensive 2013

Saturday 2 November 2013

The seminar is opened by Martin Prchal, vice-principal at the Royal Conservatoire, who firstly welcomes all new teachers that have arrived for the ERASMUS Impro Intensive. He also mentions the increasingly international reach of the project, which has attracted participants for the US and Japan in addition to the European participants.

Martin also describes the development in the themes for the public seminars that have taken place during the three ERASMUS Impro Intensives: where the first seminar addressed the place and role of improvisation in the curriculum of the participating institutions, the second seminar explored various techniques and didactic approaches for teaching improvisation. This third seminar will look at the position of improvisation in the reality of contemporary music practice.

In addition, Martin mentions the latest developments at the Royal Conservatoire involving improvisation. The Conservatoire has introduced a new Master elective for improvisation, is supporting research in the field of improvisation and will also implement a totally new curriculum for theory in the classical music department in September 2014, which will have improvisation as a fixed and obligatory component.

Lecture by Rineke Smilde: "Improvisation and Identity – a biographical perspective"

Martin then introduces the first speaker: Prof. Rineke Smilde who is Lector at the Prins Claus Conservatoire in Groningen and visiting professor at the University for Music in Vienna. Rineke has done ground-breaking biographical research on musicians and in this research improvisation has been a very important theme. The full text of her presentation can be found in this report below.

Presentation by the Scroll Ensemble

The Scroll Ensemble presents itself as a case study of how improvisation can be used in early music concert practice. The full text of the presentation can be found in this report below.

Presentation by Hervé Sellin, Conservatoire de Paris

Hervé Sellin, who teaches jazz piano at the Conservatoire de Paris, explains his own development and background, which started as a classical piano student at the Conservatoire. He found the pressure in terms of repertoire and the competitive attitude difficult and experienced his 'excursion' to jazz as a relief. Jazz became his hobby and eventually he became a real jazz pianist, who asked himself the question how to bring the classical and jazz worlds together. He describes how he found looking back at classical music with the spirit of a jazz musician very refreshing. He is also of the opinion that improvisation is not a language or repertoire, but more an attitude. The attitude is to tell a story through music and it does not matter whether this is done through jazz or classical music, improvised or not. Improvisation should not be put separate, but the attitude of improvisation needs to be transformed to other musical situations. In doing so, musical knowledge is essential, especially the relationship between harmony and improvisation, as well as the understanding of form. Of course having freedom in expression is important as well, but according to Hervé it is especially about the way how to listen to others. This as an attitude is more important than playing in a certain style. Hervé believes this attitude will also help in relation to audience development and promoting music in a wider context. It is also about opening your mind to all different possibilities in terms of reaching out to the audience.

Presentation by Guus Janssen and David Kweksilber, Royal Conservatoire The Hague

Composer/pianist Guus Janssen and clarinetist David Kweksilber give a demonstration of how they use improvisation in their concert practice, which mainly consist of connecting existing compositions with each other through improvisations. Guus tells the story of Polish composer Sigmund Krause, who wrote pre-etudes for the etudes by Chopin and found it was easier to play these when combined with improvisation. David explains how improvisation can help to get into

your own 'sound world' . Furthermore, the musicians show how performances can be made more unexpected and therefore imaginative by alternating repertoire and improvisations (from "HOW will they play something?" to "WHAT will they do next?"). This will appeal to the audiences due to its additional experience and challenge their curiosity. The musicians also mention they are in the habit of talking to the audience and explain what they do. It has to be fun. Does the audience need to be re-educated? Even if this approach is different from what the audience expects from a classical concert, such a 'provocation' can give a concert an additional and more creative dimension.

Presentation by Agusti Fernández, ESMUC Barcelona

Agusti starts with posing the question 'what do I do as a performer?'. He explains how he has roots in both classical contexts and jazz scenes, but does not feel being engaged in academic research. According to Agusti, it is important for the experience with repertoire to have the ability to improvise. This combination gives many opportunities, more than being active in of each only, as he 'read' music, play jazz, but also be part of the avant-garde scene. He describes the music of Barry Guy, who uses combinations of written compositions and bits of improvisation: jumping from the score to improvisation and back. Or, for example, ensembles plays from a score, while the solo part is improvised. Such performances are usually done on the spot without any preparation. But in order to be able to do this, one needs a large vocabulary and experience developed over a long time. This vocabulary is built up mainly through imitation and by using improvisation. Another practice Agusti is involved in is one in which nothing is written down and uses a lot of electronics. According to Agusti, there are two type of composers: a) those that like musicians with a big name to play what I want or b) those that pick musicians to see what they can do together. The music score is very much left to chance. A composer writing this way is Evan Parker, who has been recording a lot for ECM. Agusti also shows an example of how to relate to written music by demonstrating the music by Ettore Parra using a very specific form of notation. Finally, he explains how he finds it very rewarding to be active in both the contemporary and the improvisation scenes, as he can learn from both.

Presentation by Claron McFadden, Conservatoire of Amsterdam, and David Dolan, Guildhall School of Music & Drama

Claron describes her own background, which initially was not classical or in jazz. She started initially to play the oboe and studied this at the Eastman School, but found that the voice was better to express herself, so voice was added to her studies. Once graduated, she moved to Amsterdam, where she got involved in baroque music, the contemporary music scene and improvisation. Claron poses the question what we can bring back from improvisation to classical music. She believe it is very helpful to 'deconstruct' the piece by making free improvisations on the basis of a written composition and then put it together again. This can bring much more fluidity in the final interpretation. But let's not forget that all classical musicians improvise all the time, even if they are not composing: the way they use dynamics, engage the audience or how they express themselves. She demonstrates this with John Cage's Aria. In this composition, much is written down but there is also a lot of freedom. Does the availability of the score make it much more clear of not? The piece can be used for audience participation in this way. As an example of 'deconstructing' existing repertoire, she does an improvisation with David Dolan on Schubert's Ave Maria, in which both musicians start with the original composition, then go on to improvise and finally come back to the original composition again.

Roundtable with presenters and students chaired by Martin Prchal

In the final roundtable various issues are discussed. Students share their experience of how improvisation helped them to learn how to listen. But how to implement improvisation in your own institution? Should improvisation be asked for at the entrance examinations to check musicianship skills or would this be too ambitious? Furthermore, in the discussion suggestions are made to take the subject of improvisation further in a possible new project that would follow up the current one, which ends after this third edition. Would there be scope for a deepening of the European cooperation, e.g. in the form of joint programmes or joint modules? How can we continue with the

exchange of expertise? Looking back at these three intensive programmes, all present agree this has been an enormously beneficial experience for the students, teachers and the institutions, many of which are now looking at reconsidering or further developing their use of improvisation in the curriculum. It is clear that there is a strong interest to continue with the cooperation and bring it to a next level.

Improvisation and Identity – a biographical perspective

Rineke Smilde, Professor of Lifelong Learning in Music
Hanze University Groningen – Prince Claus Conservatoire
Lecture on the occasion of the seminar of ERASMUS Improvisation Intensive
The Hague, November 2, 2013

I am happy to be able to address you on the occasion of this seminar which is part of the exciting Intensive Project on Improvisation. It is a marvellous initiative to take Improvisation as a topic for an IP as I feel that improvisation is one of the most important issues to address for a musician. I would like to share some thoughts about improvisation with you, based on research which I did and am still doing at this very moment. It does not have to do with music history, although I will definitely talk about biographical perspectives.

Seeing improvisation as something that really needs its place in conservatoire training and education may be more or less 'new'. However improvisation *itself* is of course not at all new and has existed since as long as we can remember. I will not go into that any further, it would take not a single address but a symposium of at least two weeks.

I would like to talk to you about what improvisation means for musicians, from the perspective of their personal and professional identity as a musician, and those two can hardly be seen separate from each other.

First of all I will share some interesting outcomes with you from a biographical research which I conducted (Smilde 2009; 2009a), where I basically tried to find out how professional musicians actually *learn*. I did this by holding narrative biographical interviews with professional musicians from different countries, different age categories, different backgrounds and different professional practices. In the interviews I was in particular interested in the relationship between their life history, their educational history, and the history of the development of their musical careers. How do these musicians learn throughout their lives?

A narrative biographical interview needs some explanation. When holding such an interview you don't ask many directed questions, but you try to get your interviewee in a 'story telling mode', by asking very open questions. Holding yourself as an interviewer in the background you let your interviewee tell his or her story, in their own order, and address what they choose to address or stress. Only in a later stage of the interview you can then ask deeper about issues which you are interested in and which were for example only touched briefly, and after that you can ask questions about things you would like to know and which were not addressed at all. By using such an interview style most interviewees are quite reflective and they see things they reflect upon, sometimes (in my experience for the first time in their lives) in a new light and become very insightful. I often heard back from the musicians that they found these interviews very beneficial for their thinking.

In these interviews I learned a lot about how these musicians started their music making during childhood, how their period at the conservatoire evolved, and the stories were, obviously, very different. Some things were striking, and one of the striking things I found was the extremely important role of improvisation.

Nearly all musicians whom I interviewed (there were 32 in total) improvised spontaneously from early childhood on, that is, as soon as they got an instrument in their hands or access to an instrument, f.i. when there was a piano at home. That is good news. The bad news however is that only in a few cases attention was given to improvisation by their teacher during childhood and

adolescence. Mostly teachers had no idea how to deal with their pupils' eagerness to improvise. As a consequence nearly all of the musicians stopped improvising as soon as they got formal music education, instrumental lessons. Teachers' reactions to their attempts to improvise would range from remarking that "it's sounding nice enough, but that is not what is in the score" to downright forbidding the pupil to improvise.

In general the musicians took this for granted whilst pursuing their own pathway in improvisation outside the formal lessons. However they could feel quite insecure about it. The improvisers could be found in all generations and career categories, but it was clear that in the older generations there was even less attention for improvisation during formal education than in the younger generation. We will look into some examples and let musicians speak for themselves.

Some of the musicians were even fantastic improvisers from childhood on, just by informal learning (which can simply be defined as 'learning without a teacher', learning through listening to examples, think f.i. of cover songs, or of pop musicians creating their music in the garage). The most amazing case which I found was that of the British pianist Jonathan, born in South Africa, who started improvising as a four-year-old, playing solely by ear and performing throughout South Africa:

"I played entirely jazz as a child; when I was four, five years old I used to tour South Africa, being called the *Boogie Woogie king* of South Africa. I was very much influenced by jazz pianists like Earl Hines and Art Tatum, 'Pinetop' Smith and by the wonderful jazz singer Ella Fitzgerald. I only improvised. I could not read music at all (...) I took part in several talent competitions, like for example *Stars of Tomorrow*. I played a lot, used to go to Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Durban and at a certain moment I became a bit exploited by people. I also played with jazz bands (...) Everybody wanted to hear me play. I used to sing the pop songs of the day as well." (Smilde 2009a)

Jonathan learned the music through jazz records of his older brother. When he was eight years old his parents found that he should start to learn the piano 'seriously', but Jonathan refused. He described himself in the interview as a "rather precocious child". When Jonathan was 14 years old his parents intervened radically and put a stop to all the touring. Through a critical incident in the same period, his father losing his business, Jonathan had to change schools and in his new school he met a music teacher with whom he connected extremely well. After his strong informal experiences Jonathan was ready and motivated to start learning music in a formal way. Within a year he was playing classical concertos with an orchestra. It is not surprising that Jonathan learned very quickly to read music, as sight-reading skills and improvisation skills are related modes of the same (implicit) learning (Thompson and Lehmann 2004).

We then go to Cornelia, a jazz and pop guitarist who is already since years continuously very successful in the Netherlands with innovative projects.

"I was alone at home watching a documentary film about Nicaragua on television. It was very striking and quite terrible and it touched me deeply. After that I took up my guitar and started improvising. I had not done it much by that time and I remember it as an extremely important point in my development." (Smilde 2009a)

Here Cornelia was 16 years old when she improvised as an emotional response to something she was confronted with and which touched her deeply, being the terrible situation at that time in Nicaragua. The outlet for her feelings was improvisation, "being engaged in a conversation with yourself" (Berliner 1994) and by doing this she discovered that for her this was an extremely powerful artistic means of self-expression.

At the conservatoire she studied classical guitar. When she was graduating at the conservatoire, she was forbidden to improvise during her final exam. This can, when keeping this story in mind, be considered a kind of violation of her self-identity.

What I also found was that when musicians met other musicians who helped them with their improvisation, empowered them, so to speak; this led in more than one case to the choice for the music profession. That ranged from finding a teacher who *could* help with improvisation to a story of a young musician who was made to improvise during a formal audition for the junior school at a London Music College. This very given was fundamental for the confidence with which he pursued his pathway.

For Daniel it was from the very start crucial to have his own sound and music. He had piano lessons as a child, and started improvising at the same time. As his teacher had no idea about improvisation, Daniel would not even bother and developed his own strategies. "I worked for 10 minutes on a Chopin Mazurka and then I thought 'okay, now I know enough', and I continued improvising". He had supportive parents who encouraged him to improvise.

However this can be different. Parents could, in addition to teachers, also forbid their children to improvise. I was one of them: when my, by then young, son would practise the cello, start his study and after two lines would wander away improvising, I would say: "hold on, get back to your study!" ...Until I read this highly interesting article of John Sloboda and Jane Davidson, from 1996, called "The young performing musician", a highly recommendable article. In this article they followed during a number of years some 'high achievers' on violin. Amongst their main findings was one which struck me in particular: in addition to a lot of formal practice it is also very important to have space for non-formal practice, read improvisation. The child, Sloboda says, must have the space "to mess about", so to doing exactly what I was more or less forbidding my son. Of course this makes sense, it creates a sense of ownership and can lead to increased intrinsic motivation. Sloboda and Davidson found more in this study, e.g. that the role of the teacher for young beginners is crucial, not that she or he should be the best teacher in the world, but that she or he must be genuinely interested in the child, and only at a later stage (during puberty) the teacher becomes through his performance skills a role model for the child. And last but not least, also a finding to make you humble: they found that the young high achievers were better off when the parents were no professional musicians! Just be supportive to the child and be interested is much more important than being knowledgeable about music.

Let's get back to the Chopin Mazurka boy Daniel who wandered off and was messing about. Today he is an improvising musician. He says:

"I like to step on a stage and to start improvising without having prepared anything. I just hope then to bring something as compelling as can be the case with written music. *I'm in pursuit of beautiful moments.*" (Smilde 2009a)

So: improvisation is described as fulfilling and being in pursuit of beautiful moments. It requires trust and self-confidence and a strong sense of self-identity. I will get back to this later on.

In addition to self-expression improvisation also serves as an important educational tool. Two elderly cello pedagogues whom I interviewed, at that time aged 83 and 68, both used it on purpose. They never improvised in the conservatoire, and started to do it at a much later age. They both use improvisation consciously in their lessons for the development of artistic and interpretative skills.

In improvisation musicians bring previously learned material together, where they use motor, cognitive and knowledge based skills (Kenny and Gellrich 2002); this happens of course in an internalised and implicit way. As such it should be regarded (and used) as a strong educational means, especially since musicians are clearly from early childhood very motivated to improvise.

Improvisation as self-identity

Within my biographical research it showed clearly in many of the life stories that three interdependent incentives appear fundamental to the process of shaping musicians' self-identity: the first being singing and informal music-making throughout childhood, the second improvisation, and the third is engagement in high quality performance.

Informal learning appears a very important mode of learning in music, in childhood as well as later in life. A sustained opportunity for informal learning and improvisation brings musicians in a situation where dependence of each other and thus trust and overcoming one's feelings of vulnerability are required. It can lead to musicians' feelings of ownership of their learning, and thus to the development of more positive self-esteem. I found very interesting relationships between being engaged in improvisation and reducing stage fright, or performance anxiety.

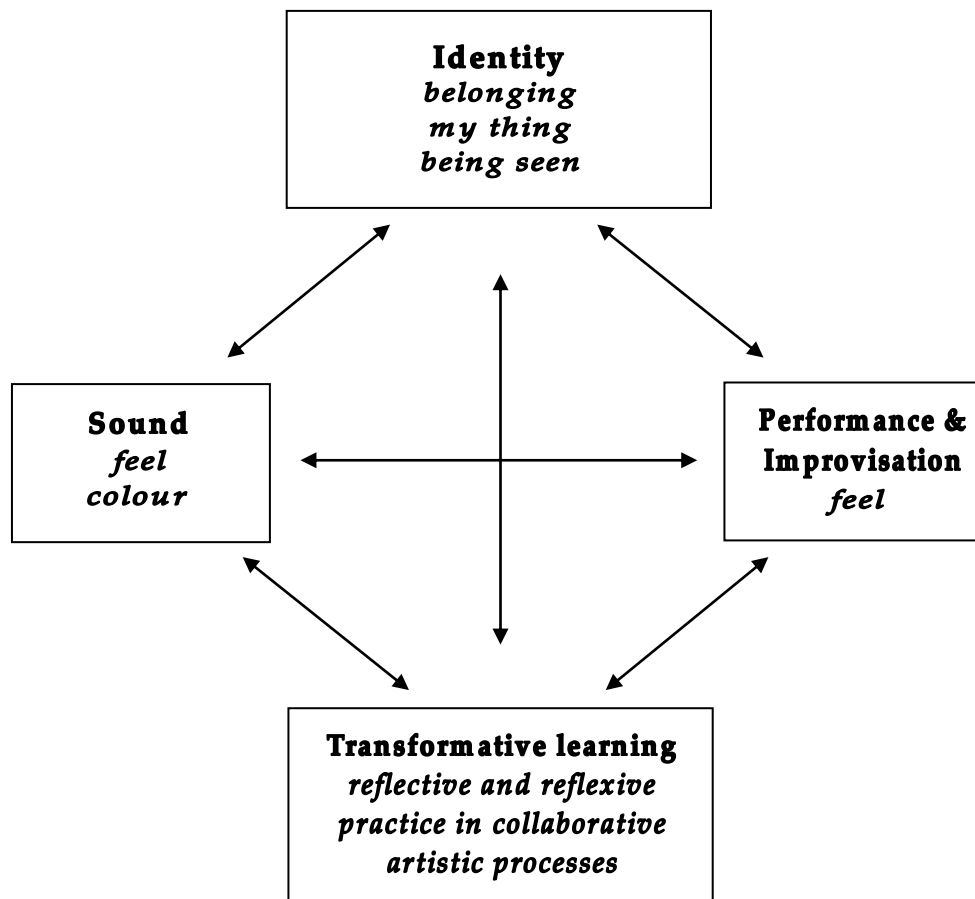
Improvisation deals with expressing one's inner self, it is connected to your identity as a person and as a musician. It relates to expressivity, musical communication and conversation, social learning and ownership. I found that and would like to explore that a bit further.

When 'my' musicians talked about artistic processes, they often used metaphors, it seems a kind of shared language. Metaphors for musicians' self-identity are often found in the notion of *sound*. A strong connection between the notion of sound and identity is articulated by Simon, a creative music workshop leader who engages through improvisation with different sorts of audiences:

"(...) things need to be said through music, through *sound* in the first instance (...) Saying things through music can contribute to how people interact, to how people feel about themselves, view themselves as individuals, and how they interact in groups. That is achieved through the fundamental organisational means of sound, like rhythm, harmony, textures whatever. They are steered, created and manipulated even in response to what is needed at that moment." (Smilde 2009a)

The word 'whatever' above might, together with the other musical parameters which Simon addresses, indicate the notion of *colour*, often mentioned by musicians, not only referring to instrumental timbres or textures, but also to certain moods in music.

The following scheme draws some of the metaphors together. 'Sound' and 'colour' can be found in the left box.



However, there is more to be found in the area of sound connected to identity. Jonathan, the pianist we met earlier on, even speaks about sound as “a personal enriching experience”, where “sound has got to relate to and mirror (...) all the emotions and feelings of life”.

In addition, improvisation and singing (singing especially during childhood) and engagement in high quality performance clearly address musicians’ sense of *belonging*, which includes notions of *being seen*, and *my thing* (top box). All these three words are used often by the musicians, basically addressing the question of their self-identity.

Furthermore, sound and improvisation are both connected to *feel* (left and right box). ‘Feel’ is a word used by the musicians for the tacit understanding of their musical language, but it also emerges in a second connotation, referring to relations between musicians. Those two understandings are interconnected: in order to play together in a reflexive way, coming to flow whilst having tacit, implicit understanding amongst yourselves, most musicians need to have an open and trusting relationship. That came across very clearly.

Lastly, we see the word ‘transformative learning’, which is learning through critical reflection on life experiences as well as learning through reflexive artistic experiences, in improvisation. Transformative learning means: changing your frame of reference or “knowing differently” (Kegan 2009) and that brings me to the last part of my address. We have just addressed the relationship of improvisation to your self-identity as a musician and now I would like to explore the use of improvisation as a means of connecting with “the other”, the identity of the other.

Improvisation is a very strong means to use in practices where musicians engage with many different audiences in the community (be it children in schools, elderly people, prisoners, whatsoever). A strong example which I would like to discuss with you is a practice on Music and

Dementia, a practice which we have researched in the UK and the outcomes of which are currently being used for the development of a programme within the joint master New Audiences and Innovative Practice, in a collaboration between the conservatoires in Groningen and The Hague.

The project which we researched is called *Music for Life*; it is managed by Wigmore Hall in London and consists of series of interactive creative music workshops in care homes and day care centres for people with dementia in the UK. During a period of eight weeks three musicians, including one music workshop leader, work with a group of eight residents and five members of the care staff, using musical improvisation as a catalyst to bring about communication in a wide sense. The main objectives of the project are to strengthen the relationships between people with dementia and those with their careers.

The musicians use a wide range of verbal and non-verbal ways in order to reach the individual residents and the residents and care staff as a *group*. Both the pleasure in music-making and the reflection of the care staff on the impact of the sessions are important. The insights and motivation which the care staff may gain can result in positive long-term effects on their work with the residents. It can lead to improved interaction between care staff and residents, which can also take place on a deeper, implicit and non-verbal level. The projects therefore are especially concerned with finding, or rather 're-finding' *the person behind the dementia*. Again, identity.

Let us listen to Oliver Sacks in his book *Musicophilia, Tales of Music and the Brain*:

"The perception of music and the emotions it can stir is not solely dependent on memory, and music does not have to be familiar to exert its emotional power (...) I think that [people with dementia] can experience the entire range of feelings the rest of us can, and that dementia, at least at these times, is no bar to emotional depth. Once one has seen such responses, one knows that there is still a *self* to be called upon, even if music, and only music, can do the calling." (Sacks 2008: 385)

In their workshops the musicians need, as they call it themselves a '360 degrees radar' for their improvisation with the residents and care staff. This means that their *sensitivity* towards the people with dementia is key. This way of improvising has been termed by us: 'applied improvisation.' By this we mean improvisation, that can be 'applied' within a particular social context for a particular audience. It means that musicians not only use improvisation in a manner that communicates meaningfully with their audience, but also acts to engage this audience in the music making process. Applied improvisation or person centred improvisation entails a variety of approaches that seek to 'tune in' to the group in order to create music that authentically reflects the group and its members, with musicians drawing upon a body of shared repertoire and approaches.

Damian:

"...it requires individual freedom, and not to be so fixed in what you're doing, but to be very flexible to go with somebody else's ideas. Because the balance is very fragile. And in the rehearsals and the preparation hour we always do some playing where we have to develop our sensitivity to each other and a sort of responsibility about where the music is going. It's very easy to just improvise freely, and just sort of let the music go wherever, but when you have a particular agenda, you have a person who is playing that music with a particular resident, you have to incorporate them into what you're doing. So you can't just think, 'oh well, I feel like playing it like that'. Because then that's your thing, you know? So it's really floating, we float around each other in that way, and that is why the people we have in the project are really special."

The person-centred musical improvisation in this practice consists of tuning in with a resident *and* yourself and can therefore be considered a musical metaphor for identity and connection, for I and Thou, as the cellist Fiona says "*you're trying to be someone else's music for them*." (Smilde, Page and Alheit 2014). Fiona asks herself the question what *sound* can reflect who the residents are at a

particular moment: *"What sound can I try now to help either reflect who they are at this moment or what sound is going to connect? It's all about your observations about that person, rather than about what you're creating."*

It is of critical importance to connect; the word 'connection' is used a lot in this practice in relation to identity. Sensitivity is therefore also a much used word amongst the musicians. As people with dementia are sensitive, Fiona observes: *"There has to be a real honesty from within yourself. Residents will pick up if you're not being authentic."* Sensitivity amongst the musicians, 'feel' or 'knowing that the other knows' is therefore key. Trust and extensive personal contact are conditional for the transfer of tacit knowledge and understanding in this practice.

Music is a communicative, social activity and can play an empowering role for many more 'audiences' than we tend to envision. Key is the validation of both the artistic identity of the musician and the context to which she responds. Such an artistic and social learning process takes place on an equal and mutual basis. Or, to put it in the words of the staff development practitioner, the music is : *"generated by the musicians from the residents."*

And that is key. These words can apply to any context! In particular the ability to make observations through the eyes of another is important, as one of the musicians remarks in her reflective journal: *"How can I reflect who you are and how you are in the music I play for you? How can I play music that you can own? What is your sound?"*

Matthew:

"I think there's [...] that sort of thing that musicians or artists can do that other people don't do or that sort of, yeah, it's another level of support, isn't it? About acknowledging who somebody is that's completely without words, completely beyond words, a sort of recognition of them [...] You know, of kind of losing myself so much in the essence of another person. "

So: with the aim of finding the *person behind the dementia* in a participatory process at the core of this practice, this project which we researched opened up learning processes for the musicians involved, which were nurturing their professional lives and development and went far beyond learning into this particular practice. It stimulated deep reflections about their identity as a musician. Damian, by that time part-time violist in the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and musician in this practice gets the last word, because in this quote he brings together what improvisation brings him in terms of his own identity and in terms of bringing out the identity of others. And also it is a clear statement about the enrichment which being involved in this practice brings him as a musician and a person:

"Doing this work has been a way for me to connect my musicianship with a deepening sense of who I am in this world, brought about by extraordinary interactions with extraordinary people (...) This work continues to teach me who I am, and is a bench mark against which I judge everything else I do. It's extraordinary how working with people whose version of reality is so vague can in fact be the ultimate reality check!"

I hope to have made the case for the importance of improvisation and the depth of it in the lives and professional practices of musicians!

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Improvisation in today's Current Concert Practice

With specific reference to the work of the Scroll Ensemble as case study

**Theatrical lecture recital performed in the Impro Intensive Seminar, 2nd November, 2013
at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague.**

The Scroll Ensemble:

Robert de Bree: Recorder/oboe
James Hewitt: Violin
Iason Marmaras: Harpichord/voice
Florencia Bardavid: Viola da gamba

Introduction

The Scroll Ensemble performs an improvised ciaccona, which continues while Robert introduces the Scroll Ensemble in declamatory style.

Robert

The Scroll Ensemble consists of Florencia Bardavid, Robert de Bree, Iason Marmaras and James Hewitt. Improvisation is the backbone of the group's existence. Within the field of improvisation the ensemble focuses on historical improvisation: improvisations inspired by the past.

The topic of the seminar is improvisation in the current concert scene. We will look at this from the point of view of Early Music. The Scroll Ensemble will be taken as a case study; how does improvisation enrich the concert practice? This is done by giving the ensemble's aims, the approach and a few examples of concert programmes.

Finally we conclude by relating our experiences to what we see as the general benefits of improvisation in today's concert practice.

So, "What is improvisation?"

Music stops abruptly

James

Presenting a lecture one also improvises: you may know what you are going to say, but how you say it, the intonation and rhythm, are all spontaneous. Improvisation stems from speech.

Iason accompanies text with Gregorian chant

In the beginning of modern western music, Gregorian chant was notated with neumes, small signs over the text indicating whether the voice should go up or down. Only the contour was notated. The melody was not exactly improvised, but was carried by an aural tradition which did not rely on printed music for its transmission. Between the important structural points there is considerable freedom in the ornaments.

This principle is carried through centuries: improvisation consists of how you move between structural points, and the vocabulary which you use to do so.

James plays an improvised prelude in the style of Hotteterre, continuing while Iason speaks.

Iason

Improvisation is especially important in the performance of what has come to be referred to as "early music". In repertoire before the 19th century, notation often only indicated the structural points of a piece, or in any case a suggestion of how to move between them; composers did not necessarily expect performers to follow these suggestions to the letter, and in any case performers seldom did. This is evidently the case with unnotated ornaments as well as with the (then-

unnotatable) nuances of expression, both of which were admired in great performers. Not only did notation thus imply the array of possible interpretations; but the mastery of improvising those was the mark of musical greatness.

James

As an example, the famous violin virtuoso and composer Arcangelo Corelli would never have intended performers to imitate his ornaments. There are many examples of ornamentation throughout the 18th Century. Each performer had his or her own individual voice, within the style in which he or she was working.

The Scroll Ensemble performs an improvised Bergamasque. Robert sings melodies, which are taken up by the audience.

Approach and aims of the Scroll Ensemble

Florencia

The ensemble takes stylistic criteria and musical examples as its starting point.

The study of primary sources (such as improvisation and composition treatises and musical examples from different periods) allows the improviser to get in touch, not only with the musical material itself, but also with an approach to "music making".

In this sense, the material is a pedagogical help and inspiration to create one's own improvised pieces. The ensemble is constantly learning individually, but especially within the context of the group. Ensemble improvisation highlights learning from each other. Rehearsals are workshops in which one learns pieces and experiments creating improvisations, looking at what works and what does not.

Regarding the improvisation itself, the aim is not only to be able to improvise individual solos on an accompaniment, but to approach improvisation as an ensemble matter. How can an improvised piece and concert programmes be created as a group, with the instruments we have?

The aim in relation to the audience is to involve them with and to let them take part in the performance, by using melodies they might know or by actually asking them to take part in the creation of a musical excerpt.

Some of the elements that the ensemble uses in rehearsals and presentations are:

Oral tradition: for example, bass patterns and melodies are often taught by one member by ear, and learnt all together in order to improvise on them.

Playing without scores: in all our concerts and presentations the aim is to always play without scores. This implies all the patterns on which we improvise have been learned by heart. The reason for that is that we have seen how much it changes the way we play within the ensemble, the stage presence and the communication with the public.

- Interacting with each other: maybe the most interesting experience as an ensemble is to observe the interaction which takes place when improvising all at the same time.

The scroll ensemble improvises a toccata, demonstrating musical interaction within the ensemble.

Programming improvisation: the challenges

Robert

Presented like a recitative, Iason playing accompanying on the harpsichord:

The Scroll Ensemble did not start as an improvisation ensemble. It is only out of the enthusiastic reactions to an improvised encore, that this group as such was born. And this is the crux of the

problem when it comes to programming a whole improvisation concert. It is lovely for the audience that one piece is improvised, jolly and “breaks free from the form”. But, as we all know, mere freedom does not necessarily make for interesting music. So, it was hard to find a way to present improvisation to the audience, although for the ensemble members the personal path of developing the improvisations became clearer and clearer.

Finding ideas for programmes, the following three challenges arose:

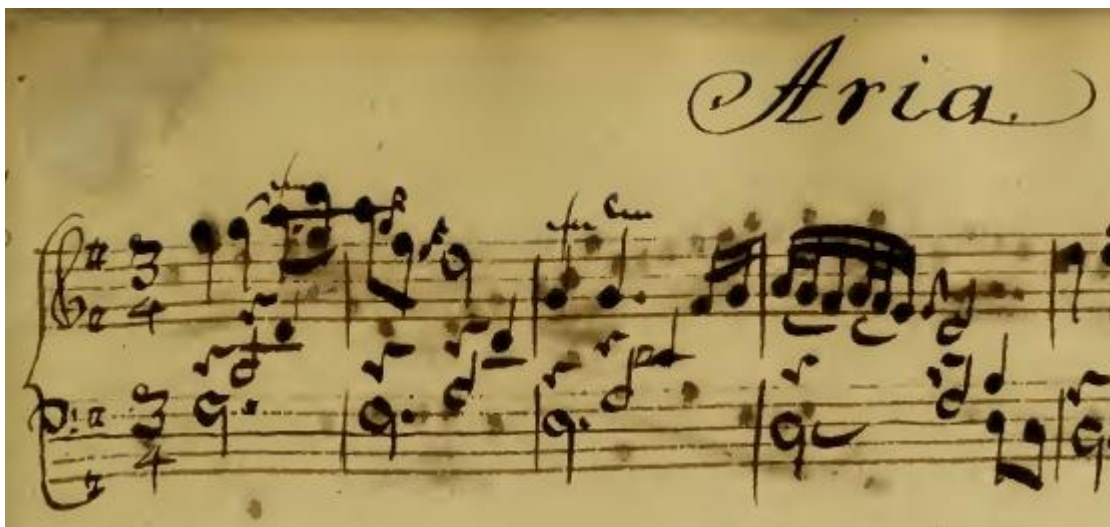
1. Generating potential audience: What might lure in the audience?
2. Giving context to the audience: What is it that we are doing?
3. How do you find enough variety and depth in a whole programme, avoiding a dry ‘lecture recital’ approach?

Different solutions to connect more to the audience include the use of a composer, a story, historical evidence, dance, inspiration of other artists or specific interaction with the audience. In this field there is still a lot of room for experimentation. One of the experiments is in fact this lecture, in which improvised musical examples, text and movements are choreographed.

Solutions: Specific programmes

Use of a composer: Bach’s Workshop

Iason plays first four bars of Goldberg Variations:



Iason

Do you recognise this piece?

(James and Florencia continue improvising on the Goldberg theme, pizzicato)

It was the ubiquity of the Goldberg Variations that is used in creating the programme *Bach’s Workshop*, both as a beacon to draw the audience into the world of our improvisations, and as a compass to guide us in enriching that world.

This double function of the Goldberg Variations ran through the whole process of conceiving and putting together the programme.

As a starting point for musical conception, we explored the stylistic and compositional devices used by Bach, and the music which inspired Bach: building a dance suite on the simplified bass on which

the Goldberg Variations are based, creating an “ensemble toccata” based on 17th-century keyboard toccatas, and improvising a contrapuntal fantasy.

We also explored the link between the familiarity of a well-known piece of music, and the exciting ever-newness of improvisation. The link having been established as the conceptual basis of the programme, it offered fertile ground for sometimes daring or abstract explorations which the audience could still connect to.

Use of Theatre: *Bockxvoetje*

Robert

The programme *Bockxvoetje* came into being through the use of a story and historical evidence. Many historical theatre texts have cues for music which did not leave a paper trail. Often the music would be well-known songs which the musicians or actors would approach with improvisation. After all, the distinction between composition, performance and improvisation did not nominally exist until after the 18th century. Even though the actual sheets of music are missing, the Scroll Ensemble can use sources from that time to improvise fitting music. On top of that a stage director is given many more possibilities with a group of musicians that does not need stands, could be on stage and can adjust the length and other parameters of the music to the drama of the spur of the moment.

This led to the idea of using a 17th-century Dutch song as a little libretto for a street-theatre type performance, shedding light with our improvisations on the subtleties of the text.

The final stage of this project was to include a dancing master. The dancing master teaches the audience to dance on some of the improvised music. Historically, the *intermedii* would have often been danced by the audience. The audience thus partakes in the joy of the music, whilst familiarising themselves with it. They will become more aware through multiple listening and tying movement (dance) with music. As a consequence the audience will be more aware of what the improvisation constitutes whilst enjoying themselves.

Use of unspoken drama: *O solitude*

James

Another approach to creating programmes of improvisation is to consider the programme as an unspoken drama. In the past, the study of rhetoric (how to make a convincing and moving speech) was one of the cornerstones of education, and music borrowed rhetorical devices in order to keep the audience's attention and move the audience. Some are related to structure (contrast, repetition, variation) others are related to specific affects or characters.

A programme built dramatically in this way can be held together by a theme or concept, while allowing for a variety of contrasting styles- even outside early music. And it can be physical: where do we move on stage, what is the effect of where we are, which is often related to music, an obvious example being echo or antiphonal effects.

One example is a programme in concert hall “*Orgelpark*”, with Guus Janssen and Cora Schmeisser. The overarching theme here is that of exploring the relation between past and present, and is inspired by a quotation from T. S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*:

“Time present and time past is perhaps present in time future and time future in time past”.

This theme of ‘solitude’, alienation from the past, gives the opportunity to bring together *Dido's Lament* (1689) by Purcell and jazz standard *In Walked Bud* (1947) by Thelonious Monk, to follow *O Solitude* (1698) by Purcell with jazz standard *In My Solitude* (1934) by Duke Ellington; to move between early music improvisation and contemporary improvisation.

It also gives the opportunity to use space in a way that distance represents time, for example when Cora is left alone after *O Solitude*, or, in a piece which I wrote, *Still Point*, playing from different parts in the gallery, in order to represent as it were, coexisting multiple realities. The idea, inspired by quotations by T.S. Eliot, is that past, present and future are really omnipresent but it is our own perspective that is responsible for the linear concept of time.

James, Robert and Jason make circles with the arms, improvising with the words 'past', 'present' and 'future', each word coming on the impulse of the circle, before improvising for a moment only with movement.

Florencia enters, and the ensemble freezes. Florencia puts some cards into the hands of each member of the ensemble, before explaining the 'card game'.

Audience Participation: The Card Game

Florencia

The Card Game is based on a contraption proposed by Athanasius Kircher in his *Musurgia Universalis* (1650). According to the treatise, any lay person could compose a decent piece of music, even four-part counterpoint, using this "musical arc". The arc works through the manipulation of different cards which interact with each other in what looks like a filing cabinet, the secrets of which you had to be initiated in. Several Royals received this honour.

There are four sets of cards: character, rhythmical motive, instrumentation and texture.

After showing the cards giving the possibilities for each parameter, four audience members are given a set to choose a parameter. According to the outcome the ensemble improvises a little piece, as it were composed by the audience.

Conclusion

Florencia

Improvising is important for every performer, even if maybe the goal is not to improvise in a concert situation. As it is hoped we have shown here: it increases the profile of the performer. Improvising changes the way one plays because it widens the scope of attention: it makes you more aware of the harmony, and therefore of the direction of the music. It creates more awareness of the ensemble playing because you have to listen to what the others are doing in order to find your way. It makes you more aware of your role in a certain moment in a piece. Any musical proposal (for example dynamic, character, tempo, instrumentation changes, etc.) must be very clear and present for the other players to understand what is going on.

Robert

In the current musical world there is an incredible plurality of styles in music. A recent fashion is for all those styles to meet in concert and festival programmes. A great approach to learning from all these different cultures and styles is to improvise. Each improvisation gives the performers a canvas, to which they bring their backgrounds and idiom. Through improvisation performers can find an understanding, a language, consisting of all their backgrounds, whilst still being able to make the end result a comprehensible presentation: the improvisation functions as a cultural glue. This versatility is one of the great things about improvisation. Beside interaction with different people, it also gives the opportunity to cross the border to different spaces, to react directly to the surroundings. It creates thereby new areas of performance. For example, one might be able to get more work, if stage directors know you are able to improvise stylistically, moving or dancing freely on the stage, or commenting on the action. Jam sessions in pubs open up contact with people that may never have heard classical music and can relate to the energy resultant from the forces of creation in the present. Commenting on other forms of art and communicating in unexpected places are other ways to cross the borders of our world. With a decline of audience interest in

classical music and the decrease of performance places, one could say, that the openness learned from improvisation directly leads to an increase of the profile of the performer.

James

We would like to end with another quotation by T.S. Eliot.

"We will never cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we first started and know the place for the first time"

Improvisation keeps the performance tradition alive. Not necessarily because it creates something radically new, but because it sheds new light on the old, and keeps bringing fresh perspectives to everything we know already.

The Scroll Ensemble improvises a fantasy on an ascending hexachord. This theme is passed around the ensemble, always present in one part. To conclude an improvised Ciaccona.

www.thescrollensemble.com

Impressions from the Third European Impro Intensive November 2013 / Noam Sivan

In November 2013 the Third Annual European Improvisation Intensive Project took place in the Royal Conservatoire The Hague. Supported by the ERASMUS program of the European Union, this wonderful project is dedicated to the development of improvisation pedagogy in music education at the conservatory level. In most music schools improvisation is considered a new and experimental area of study, in spite of its strong presence throughout centuries of music history, and securing its place in the curriculum is not easy. Addressing this problem, Impro Intensive fills an important gap in the world of musical improvisation. The interaction between improvisation experts and students from all over Europe through workshops, concerts, and lectures, now for the third year in a row, helps the field to gain the international legitimacy that is so crucial to its survival and eventual flowering.

Participating in the project for the second time now, my thanks go to Martin Prchal and Karst de Jong for inviting me to take part. As an improvisation teacher in three classical music conservatories in North America: Juilliard, Curtis, and Mannes – I share many of the challenges reported by my colleagues who teach improvisation at European institutions. The present report, summarizing the Third Impro Intensive (November 2013), is a continuation of my report from last year which dealt with the Second Impro Intensive (February 2013). Considering the short length of my stay, from November 3rd to the 7th, my conclusions will naturally relate to events taking place during those dates.

Scope of the Project

Describing the challenges in organizing a project centring on improvisation pedagogy, and how they were met, in my previous report on the Second Impro Intensive I wrote the following:

Prominent among those challenges are: the unpredictable musical result of an improvisation, especially performed by students, the enormous diversity of musical styles covered in a short span of time, the inherent difficulty of teaching or lecturing on such an abstract topic, the existence of widely different pedagogical approaches, more than in other disciplines, and the special and emotionally delicate teacher-student relationship as students explore their own creativity and personal ideas through music.

Considering all these, the existence of Impro Intensive is nothing less than a miracle, as the organizers did not shy away from any of these challenges. The project covered artistic styles ranging from eighteenth-century classical improvisation all the way to absurd theatre and extended performing techniques, thus allowing the international student body to be exposed to many different modes of expression. The supportive atmosphere enabled the students to improvise in concert without fear of judgment, and it allowed them to experiment, make mistakes, and learn from their experiences. The collegial interaction between faculty members was fruitful in encouraging the diverse approaches to co-exist peacefully. All of these together are essential to the development of improvisation as a serious discipline.

Looking at the transition from the Second Impro Intensive into the Third, several aspects this year have increased the effectiveness of the workshops:

- Among the participating students in the Third Impro Intensive, about 30% are returning students. They are experienced improvisers, and came to the project knowing how they want to improve, making the learning environment more focused.
- This year the workshops were organized according to sub-categories of improvisation, including: tonal, free, modal, theatrical, and electronic. In this way, students chose not just

teachers, but topics, which helped to minimize confusion from moving back and forth between musical styles.

- There were separate morning and afternoon groups. The morning groups had longer sessions, preparing the students for a final performance. Thus, students could choose a major and secondary focus, as well as one-time electives.

These aspects, beyond the detailed level of making small improvements to an annual project, plant the seeds of growth for the field of improvisation at large. Any of these sub-categories are presentable in concert, but they need a future generation of musicians specializing in each of them – hopefully not only once a year, but on an ongoing basis.

Larger Impact of the Project

The success of an improvisation project is not measured only by the enthusiasm of its devoted practitioners – preaching to the converted is rarely enough – but also by its ability to attract additional professional musicians and to broaden its impact in the music world. Several such examples were noted in the Third Impro Intensive:

- Claron McFadden, an internationally known soprano, came to improvisation relatively recently in her career. Performing and teaching at Impro Intensive has helped her to develop as an improviser, and now it is an important part of her artistic personality.
- The presence of international professional musicians who are accomplished performers and teachers, travelling to Impro Intensive in order to learn about improvisation, with the purpose of including it in their future performing and teaching activities, was heart-warming. These included soprano Mona Julsrud, violinist Terje Moe Hansen (both are faculty at the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo), pianist Tomomi Ohrui (faculty at Senzoku Gakuen Music College in Kawasaki and Kunitachi College in Tokyo), pianist Horia Maxim (faculty at Bucharest National University of Music), and flutist Mihaela Anica (teaching in Bucharest and Vienna). Some of them have spoken of colleagues who became bored from teaching the same repertoire over and over again. Improvisation here has an important function in providing a fresh perspective for studio teaching of students who learn to play an instrument, from daily warm-up exercises, to the need for self-expression.
- Leslie-Anne Lewis, conductor and scholar, travelled from London to The Hague as part of her academic research on musicianship. In looking for the common principles in the traditional areas of musicianship (studying harmony, ear-training, etc.), improvisation has an important role, connecting the dots between several related aural, manual, and cognitive skills.

Summary of Activities

Having separate categories for the various workshops during the second week of the project enabled the teachers – some of whom returned from last year and mentioned in some detail in my previous report – to demonstrate their strengths in their respective fields: David Dolan from London and Bert Mooiman from The Hague (tonal improvisation); Anto Pett from Tallinn, Agustí Fernández from Barcelona, and Ernst Reijseger from The Hague (free improvisation); Christoph Baumann from Lucerne and Bern, and Teemu Kide from Helsinki (theatrical improvisation); Karst de Jong from Barcelona / The Hague and Rolf Delfos from The Hague (modal improvisation); and Richard Barrett from The Hague, and Vincent le Quang from Paris (electronic improvisation). Teachers with a background in jazz, such as Arne Forsén from Stockholm and Max Tabel from Helsinki, were able to use that knowledge when teaching in a stylistically broader context.

The Tonal Impro Night, performed by faculty artists on November 4th, covered a wide variety of styles, including: early baroque (vocal elaborations on Monteverdi), late baroque (solo and ensemble preludes), nineteenth-century romanticism (variations on a theme), late nineteenth-century tonality with modal touches (preludes in all 24 keys), jazz (two-pianos, as well as saxophone and piano), extended-jazz (piano + extended techniques), and a contemporary operatic scene (voice and piano). The performers included: Mona, Claron, Bert, David and students, Noam, Karst, Arne, Rolf, and Christoph. If the sub-categories of improvisation mentioned above promote

variety and invite a specialized study, then highlighting in concert one such sub-category – tonal improvisation – shows its own wide-ranging potential.

The student concerts on November 5th and 6th featured mostly free improvisation, with some representation for theatrical improvisation and electronic improvisation. Exercises in free improvisation occasionally focus on group dynamics as a metaphor for social interaction (“control your group”, “ignore the group”, “try to fit in”, etc.). Connecting between the musical and the social in this way contributes to increased awareness in ensemble playing. Another common game-like starting point is that of instrumental limitations coupled with the focus on unusual sonorities and extended techniques. Besides the compositional challenge of dealing with limitations, this exercise helps students to learn about hidden resources of their instruments. Among the other improvisations presented in these concerts: a piece for solo bassoon, playing on its individual parts separately before putting the instrument together; a theatrical happening in English and German with intense on-stage action; free improvisation with audience members; and a loop-based piece for acoustic instruments and electronics.

In an important presentation on November 5th, David Dolan detailed the results of a brain study on the positive influence of classical improvisation on both performers and listeners. The research was conducted jointly by the Guildhall School and the Imperial College London, and published in the journal *Music Performance Research* in November 2013. The researchers concluded that audiences are much more engaged when listening to classical music with improvised elements. Receiving scientific legitimacy and support is enormously important for the improvisational community, in a profession normally lacking even a musical score or other forms of documentation.

My own lecture on November 3rd, in three parts, involved the participation of my invited guests pianist Tomomi Ohrui (Tokyo) demonstrating tonal modulations; and cellist Talia Erdal (Amsterdam) showing various rhythmic, sonic, melodic, vocal, and intervallic points of departure for improvisation; as well as conducting a large ensemble performing free improv. Later in the week, my subsequent workshops included focus on tonal harmony; modal harmony; “improv opera” (involving dramatic characters in a theatrical improvisation); and “song without words” (practicing melody + accompaniment, both improvised).

Two forms of directed-improvisation can be mentioned here. One is Soundpainting, the live composing sign language created by composer Walter Thompson which has become popular in France both as a pedagogical tool, and in performance. One of the main practitioners of this specific method for conducting ensemble-improvisation is Vincent le Quang, an Impro Intensive artist. The other form is a composition using Graphic Notation, meaning a musical score with often colourful visual symbols replacing standard notation. Agustí Fernández, an Impro Intensive artist, in addition to performing as an improviser, is also an interpreter of graphic compositions. Although these two forms of relative improvisation (as opposed to absolute improvisation) were not part of Impro Intensive, they have an important role in bridging compositional intent and improvisational practice, while preserving traditional composer / interpreter roles, and thus contribute to the wider dissemination of improvisation.

The Place of Classical Improvisation

Classical improvisation, in strict tonal styles, still struggles to find its place, even in the context of Impro Intensive, for several reasons: mastery of classical improvisation requires a lengthy learning process, something which cannot be achieved in a little over a week; the emphasis on solo improvisation, central to classical improvisation, makes it less practical for Impro Intensive; only a few of the Impro Intensive faculty specialize in teaching classical improvisation; there are hardly any role models today of world-class performers who specialize in classical improvisation, making it less visible; and there is still a widespread aesthetic question mark, resulting mostly from prejudice, on its artistic relevance in the twenty-first century. For people who care about classical improvisation, this should be food for thought.

Improvisation in the Classroom

During the project, I have noticed that some of the most meaningful experiences for the students – which have led to outbursts of happiness, tears in their eyes, and to special bonding between students – occurred in the workshops, and not in concert. These are moments when things fall into the right place, and the student is able to express something special, and this being an improvisation, it is also something unique that happens only once. We always remind ourselves that the process is sometimes even more important than the final goal, and perhaps it is even more so in improvisation. This should be kept in mind as we set our priorities and long term goals, as we seek funding for educational projects, and as we approach teaching and learning.

Improvisation in the Conservatory: *Master in Improvisation*

One of the main goals of many educators in improvisation is opening a specialized Master's program. Today, such programs exist in Tallinn for free improvisation, developed mainly by Anto Pett, and in Basel for baroque improvisation, developed mainly by Rudolf Lutz. The Paris Conservatoire and the Guildhall School in London have a "minor in improvisation", with students currently having final exams in the form of live improvisations. The Royal Conservatoire The Hague, having recently started a Master in New Audiences and Innovative Practice, is also stepping toward an improvisation program. According to Martin Prchal, its vice-principal, a future Master in Improvisation, he told me, should reflect a larger trend of refining the notion of the Master's degree. A Master's degree should be different from Bachelor's, in its focus on developing a specialty, and in having one foot in the practical world. Another challenge for a Master in Improvisation is in its ability to interact with the rest of the conservatory, and not be isolated. Each institution finds individual solutions to these issues. In the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp, for example, a large improvisation component, taught in the advanced levels by Paul Dinneweth and Yves Senden, is integrated into a five-year Practical Harmony sequence, with students majoring in conducting, composition, and theory. A connection between improvisation and theory in the undergraduate curriculum can be found in other places as well, such as ESMUC in Barcelona. Other areas of the curriculum where improvisation can be added include: keyboard studies department, organ department, jazz department, new music program, early music program, entrepreneurship / career-development angles, and even chamber music.

Just a month ago, in January 2014, an ensemble I was coaching of Juilliard students who had never improvised before, made history as the first ensemble to improvise on stage during the high profile annual ChamberFest at Juilliard. The audience members, in this sold out event, responded enthusiastically with a long standing ovation. The students were thrilled to be able to take risks in concert in such a way.

In order to find a prominent place for improvisation in the conservatory or music program, improvisation teachers have to be creative not only pedagogically, but also on an administrative level. With Impro Intensive now finishing its third and final year, the international network it has created will hopefully continue to grow. As we all fight for the legitimacy of improvisation at our individual careers and home institutions, it is important for all of us – improvisers and improvisation teachers – to keep exchanging ideas, to fight together, and to carry the message of Impro Intensive into the future.

= = =

February 10, 2014

Noam Sivan

Composer & Pianist

Faculty The Juilliard School, The Curtis Institute, Mannes College

www.noamsivan.com

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ImprovisingTheFuture>

List of participants

| Tutors and guests | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Paul Dinneweth | | The Royal Conservatoire Antwerp |
| Yves Senden | | The Royal Conservatoire Antwerp |
| Juan de la Rubia | | Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya |
| Agustí Fernández | | Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya |
| Karst de Jong | | Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya |
| Anto Pett | | Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre |
| Arne Forsén | | Royal College of Music in Stockholm |
| Horia Maxim | | National University of Music Bucharest |
| Max Tabell | | Sibelius Academy Finland |
| Teemu Kide | | Sibelius Academy Finland |
| Leslie-Anne Lewis | | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| David Dolan | | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| Phillippa Davies | | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| Terje Moe Hansen | | Norwegian Academy of Music |
| Mona Julsrud | | Norwegian Academy of Music |
| Vincent Le Quang | | Conservatoire of Paris |
| Hervé Sellin | | Conservatoire of Paris |
| Noam Sivan | | Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, the Juilliard School, and Mannes College in New York |
| Christoph Baumann | | Music Universities of Lucerne and Bern |
| Claron McFadden | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Bert Mooiman | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Rolf Delfos | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Renee Jonker | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Ernst Reijseger | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Richard Barret | | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Students | | |
| Marte Kristine Hansen | piano | Norwegian Academy of Music |
| Frederik B. Olsen | saxophone | Norwegian Academy of Music |
| Lente Verelst | flute/piano | The Royal Conservatoire Antwerp |
| Vigdis Elst | violin | The Royal Conservatoire Antwerp |
| Florent Caron | percussion | Conservatoire of Paris |
| Stanislav Makovskiy | composition/guitar | Conservatoire of Paris |
| Pedro González Fernández | violin | Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya |

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|--|
| Laura Põldvere | voice | Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre |
| Indrek Palu | violin | Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre |
| Greta Jakobsonaite | piano | Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre |
| Stefan Cazacu | cello | National University of Music Bucharest |
| Radu Grelus | clarinet | National University of Music Bucharest |
| Sikri Lehko | saxophone | Sibelius Academy Finland |
| Antti Salovaara | bassoon | Sibelius Academy Finland |
| Eevi Oittinen | oboe | Sibelius Academy Finland |
| George Barton | percussion | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| Hunter Noack | piano | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| Fra Rustumji | violin | Guildhall School of Music and Drama |
| Anton Svanberg | tuba | Royal College of Music in Stockholm |
| Guilherme Pedro Piedade | voice/piano | Royal College of Music in Stockholm |
| Ingvill Espedal | voice | Royal College of Music in Stockholm |
| Irene Novoa | voice/piano | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Anne Korff de Gidts | cello | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Sophie Wingland | voice | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Juan Miguel Moreno | piano | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Daan van Koppen | saxophone | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Maaïke Tromp | clarinet | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Hugo Loi | saxophone | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Pijus Jonusas | violin | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Alexis Bove | cello | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Magdalena Petrovich | cello | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Rogier Tamminga | cello | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Anne Overpelt | clarinet | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Ruth Fraser | voice | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Pieter de Koe | cello | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Vivienne Liao | piano | Royal Conservatoire The Hague |
| Núria Andorrà | percussion | Graduated ESMUC |
| Lea Fries | voice | Music University of Lucerne |
| Marc Jenny | bass | Music University of Lucerne |

Biographies tutors

Agustí Fernández

Agustí Fernández (Palma de Mallorca, 1954), with a perfectly based career and a wide and well-deserved international reputation, is one of the Spanish musicians of major international projection and a world reference in the field of improvised music. Fernández has worked with the founder fathers of the free improvisation scene Peter Kowald, Derek Bailey, Evan Parker and Barry Guy, a.m.o., and with improvisers from all over the world. He is a member of the Evan Parker Electro-Acoustic Ensemble, the Barry Guy New Orchestra and the Mats Gustafsson Nu Ensemble. Fernández has also collaborated with dance, theatre, movies and television. Up to the current date he has published more than 60 cd's. Along his professional life AF has received many recognitions, and his solo for piano "Mutza" presented in New York in 2007 was distinguished by the New York magazine All About Jazz as one of 10 best concerts from that year. The CD "Un llampque no s'acabamai" on PSI (Agustí Fernández, John Edwards and Mark Sanders) has been distinguished by All About Jazz as one of the best 10 CDs in 2009; the CD "Aurora" on Maya Recordings (Agustí Fernandez, Barry Guy and Ramón López) was selected by the Cuadernos de Jazz magazine as the best CD in 2007, by the Jaç magazine as the best fourth disc of the history of the Catalan jazz and it was Disc d'émoi (February, 2007) for the French Jazz Magazine. The "Agustí Fernández Aurora Trio" received the second prize at the BMW Welt Jazz Award 2012 celebrated in München, Germany. In 2011 Fernández was the main character of the documentary film "Los dedos huéspedes" by Lucas Caraba, which has been screened in festivals all over the world. Since 2001 Agustí Fernández is titular teacher of improvisation at the Catalonia High Music School (Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya). In 2010 Agustí Fernández was the recipient the "Ciutat de Barcelona Music Award" granted by the Council of Barcelona. In 2013 Agustí Fernández was the recipient of the "National Prize of Culture" granted by the Catalan Government.



Anto Pett

Anto Pett graduated from Conservatoire of Tallinn (now renamed Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre) as a pianist and composer. Since 1987 he has been teaching harmony and improvisation in the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. In 1988 he discovered, that improvisation was to become his main means of artistic expression. Since 2002 A. Pett is a regular professor of contemporary improvisation in Est. Academy of Music and Theatre. During his over twenty years of teaching A. Pett has developed an original improvisation teaching method that works successfully in teaching process with all instruments and singers.

Many of his students have been awarded prizes at the Leipzig Improvisation competition.

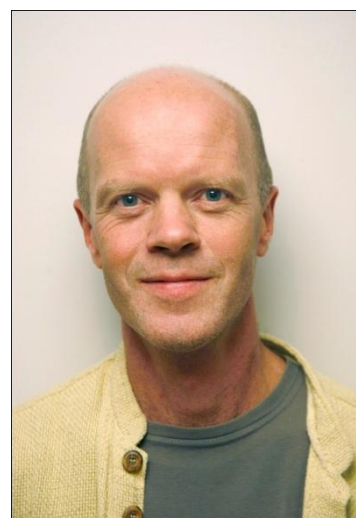
A. Pett has presented his teaching method and made master classes in many Music Schools of Estonia and in several Music Academies and Conservatoire's (now 38) in abroad (Helsinki, Stockholm, Oslo, Haag, Utrecht, Hamburg, Odense, Paris, Bordeaux, Marseille, Riga, Vilnius,



Antwerp, Cardiff, Glasgow, Warsaw, Krakow, Gdansk, Brighton, Vienna, Evanston, London, etc.). He has directed following improvisation groups: „Extemporists“ (1994-97) and PROimPRO (1998 - 2002). On 2006 together with his main performing partners, Anne-Liis Poll (voice) and Jaak Sooäär (el. guitar), was established „Free Tallinn Trio“. This ensemble had the first success in concert of festival „Christopers“, in Vilnius, 2006. These groups are invited to Festivals of contemporary music, improvisation and modern dance in Estonia, England, France, Finland, Poland, Germany, Sweden and USA etc. A. Pett has also made improvisation solo concerts in several European countries. He has conducted an improvisation orchestra concerts in many countries (e.g. GIO – Glasgow Improvisation Orchestra, Vienna, Helsinki, Stockholm). In 2003-2005 he has recorded 15 CD-s together with different improvisation artists to Erol Records, CGA collection (improvised music). 2 CD s with Leo Records 2010 – A Tale – with Free Tallinn Trio and 2012 – PlayWork – duo with Bart van Rosmalen (cello). Among the improvisators whom A. Pett has co-operated are: Kent Carter, Sylvain Kassap, Joelle Leandre, Etienne Rolin, Francois Rosse, Emile Biayenda, Albrecht Maurer, Sten Sandell, Petras Visniauskas, Stanislaw Skoczynski etc. His improvisation teaching method „A. Pett`s teaching system“ is published on 2007 by edition „Fuzeau“, www.edidions-classique.com with CD of exercises.

Arne Forsén

Arne Forsén is best known as a distinctive jazz pianist and improvising musician, but nevertheless enjoys moving in the field between musical genres and forms of expression. He has a classical training and is also experienced in traditional Swedish folk music and West African music. He eagerly collaborates with dance, visual arts and theatre. Forsén has toured in Sweden and internationally, and has collaborated with European and American musicians such as Paul Lovens, Phil Minton and Roscoe Mitchell. His focus as teacher is improvisation in many various forms, trying to break the borders between musical genres and disciplines of the arts. The core of his method is to find basic elements which is common for different expressions and can lead into any kind of music or other form of art. Besides he´s work at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm he´s working freelance and at the University of Dance and Circus, where he´s teaching and playing with focus on modern and contemporary dance. Groups and projects: BRUS TRIO – jazz, SPÅR - improvisation in music and painting, JALI ALAGI Mbye - kora master from Gambia, JOEL BREMER - folk music and improvisation, KRISTA KÖSTER - dance (Estonia), SARA RUDDOCK and LOVISA JOHANSSON - dance/performance, KRISTINA BORGKRANS - Indian dance, HANS-OLA STENLUND – theatre. Discography in selection: BRUS TRIO, "Celebration" (2011, Quica Records), SUNE SPÅNGBERG TRIO, "Surviving" (2008, Quica Records), ARNE FORSÉN (solo piano), "Where is the moon?" (2001, Dragon records), BRUS TRIO & JOHN TCHICAI, "Soaked sorrows" (1987, Dragon records).



Bert Mooiman

The Dutch pianist, organist, improviser and music theorist Bert Mooiman studied at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, The Netherlands. He took his certificates as a solo pianist and organist cum laude, and received the prestigious Fock-medal for his extraordinary artistic achievements. He studied with internationally renowned teachers such as prof. Theo Bruins and Naum Grubert (piano) and prof. Wim van Beek and Bert Matter (organ). He was a prize-winner at several international competitions, among which the 1989 international organ competition in Ljubljana. In 2003 he finished his studies as a music theorist with a paper on the relation between the work of O. Messiaen and French tonal harmony, which was rewarded with the Martin J. Lürsen – prize. The performances of Bert Mooiman encompass piano recitals, chamber music, solo concerts with orchestra, organ recitals and basso continuo playing. His repertoire ranges from the earliest music for keyboard to the most recent compositions. Bert Mooiman frequently publishes about theoretical subjects, and delivered papers at conferences of the *Dutch-Flemish Society for Music Theory* and the German *Gesellschaft für Musiktheorie*. He gives guest lectures at Leiden University.



Christoph Baumann

Christoph Baumann grew up with western classical music and is also deeply rooted in the percussive idioms of contemporary jazz and afro-cuban music. His artistic work is oscillating between the poles outgoing improvisation and composition, but he likes to question the granted positions with humour and absurdity. As a pianist and in particular as a composer he assumes stimulating or critical stances by means of playfully confronting and fusing attitudes and mentalities. His pervading interest to bring different musical styles into a dramatic context is particularly evident in his big speciality, to tailor his composed and improvised music tightly to theatre and radio plays, dance, films and his three speech-operas. Baumann teaches at the Music Universities of Lucerne and Bern and performs internationally with a big variety of soloists and ensembles. Since the late 70s he is noted for unconventional projects such as the *Jerry Dental Kollekdooft*, the Latin-experimental band *Mentalities*, *Cadavre Exquis*, *Baumann Large Ensemble*, *Afro Garage* and *Hausquartett*. His musical work is well documented on CDs.



Claron McFadden

Claron McFadden studied voice at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. Her celebrated opera roles are numerous and varied, including the title role of *Lulu* conducted by Sir Andrew Davis and The controller in Jonathan Dove's *Flight*, both performed at Glyndebourne; Zerbinetta in Graham Vick's production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* at the Dutch National Opera, where she has also performed many times; and numerous projects she has toured throughout Europe, including *Dido and Aeneas* and *Les Indes Galantes*, which she also performed at the Aix-en-Provence Festival. She sings many of the major oratorio works, but is also in demand for her interpretation of modern and contemporary music, in particular the music of Wolfgang Rihm and Harrison Birtwistle. She performed in the world premiere of Birtwistle's *The Woman and the Hare* at Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall and in August 2009 at the BBC Proms with the Nash Ensemble. Her many recordings include Birtwistle's *Paul Celan Songs*, Haydn's *Orfeo* and Gluck's *Parideed Elena* with La Stagione Frankfurt and as Aspasia in Handel's *Alexander Balus* with the King's Consort for Hyperion Records. She has also made many television appearances, including Channel 4's *My Night with Handel*, performance documentary of contemporary settings of Handel's operatic arias, available on video and DVD. Recent engagements were with L'Europe Galante (*Didone*, Scala), Göttingen Händel Festspielen, tours with Orchestra of the 18th Century, concerts with the Residentie Orchestra, engagements with the Dutch National Opera (*After life*, *Rage d'Amours*) etc., in Lyon, projects with companies like les Ballets C de la B, MuziekLod, Transparant, ballet company Leine & Roebana, chamber music projects with Arditti Quartet, Minquet Quartet, a concert tour through Europe with l'Anima Eterna, concerts with the NDR and WDR Symphony Orchestra, concerts with Münchner Kammerorchester, Orchestre de Lugano, *Platée* with the Nationale Reis Opera, and various chamber music projects with for example Arditti Quartet and the Minquet Quartet in Salzburg. Future engagements include performances in Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. Claron has also been invited by the Bayerische Staatsoper to perform a leading role in a new opera by Jörg Widmann, a leading role in a new opera of Michel van der Aa with the English National Opera (ENO), appearances in Festivals all over the world, etc. In August 2007 Claron McFadden was awarded with the Amsterdam Prize of the Arts, winning praise for her brilliant coloratura, her wide repertoire ranging from Monteverdi to Bernstein and contemporary composers, and her vivid stage personality.



David Dolan

David Dolan has devoted a part of his career as a concert pianist, researcher and teacher to the revival of the art of classical improvisation. In his performances, he incorporates extemporisation into the relevant concert repertoire in repeats, eingangs and cadenzas. David has performed worldwide in concert venues and festivals, such as the Wigmore Hall and the Royal Festival Hall in London, Auditorium Châtelet and Salle Pleyel in Paris, *Concertgebouw* and Anton Philipzaal in Holland, the Jerusalem Theatre and Tel-Aviv Museum in Israel. He has made live recordings and broadcasts for radio and TV stations. David is a professor at the Yehudi Menuhin School as well as at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he is head of the Centre for Creative Performance and Classical Improvisation. He is frequently invited to give master classes at a number of the world's leading music institutions, such as the Juilliard School, the Royal College in London, the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire in Moscow, the Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne, The Chopin University in Warsaw, the New England Conservatory in Boston, the Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv Music Academies, Verbier festival, the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, and the Paris and Geneva Conservatories. David is an associate fellow of Clare Hall, Cambridge University. David Dolan's CD "When Interpretation and Improvisation Get Together" includes improvisations and works influenced by improvisations. Yehudi Menuhin's response to it was: "David Dolan is giving new life to classical music." Born in Israel, David Dolan studied piano with Prof. Sonia Valin and composition and improvisation with Prof. Haim Alexander at the Jerusalem Academy of Music in, where he obtained his B. Mus., First Prize, as well as the "Artist Diploma - Summa Cum Laude". He then studied with Leon Fleisher at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and with Claude Frank in New York. In 1977 he took part in Arthur Rubinstein's class in Jerusalem. His PhD work examined similarities between emotional expression in speech and musical improvisation. Later research work focuses on creativity, communication and expression in performance.



Photographer: Suzan Farkas



Ernst Reijseger

Cellist and composer Ernst Reijseger (1954) plays the cello from the age of seven and began as a performing cellist and improviser in 1969. From that time on he developed his own musical vocabulary. In 1974 his teacher Anner Bijlsma advised him to cease his music education at the Amsterdam Conservatory and pursue his own way. Many of Reijseger's collaborations cannot be classified into genres. He writes for and improvises with musicians and ensembles of different musical disciplines and nationalities. He gives solo recitals, performing his own music. For solo concerts Reijseger uses a 4-string and a 5-string cello. In 2010 he received an Edison 'Hedendaags Klassiek' (Contemporary Classical) for his second solo album *Tell Me Everything* (Winter & Winter). Reijseger cooperated with saxophonist Sean Bergin, pianist Burton Greene, drummer Martin van Duynhoven, guitarist Derek Bailey, percussionist Alan Purves and guitarist Franky

Douglas, bass player Lesley Joseph, tabla player Trilok Gurtu and cellist Yo Yo Ma, pianist Franco d' Andrea, clarinetist Louis Sclavis, pianist Simon Nabatov, singer Mola Sylla and percussionist Serigne Gueye, bass player Mats Eilertsen, drummer Thomas Strønen, multi-instrumentalist Stian

Carstensen and drummer Jarle Vespestad, reed player Fredrik Ljungkvist, singer Maria Pia de Vito, pianist Uri Caine, pianists Harmen Fraanje and Wolfert Brederoode, accordion player Luciano Biondini, tuba player Michel Godard, cellist Giovanni Sollima. He was part of the Theo Loevendie Consort, Guus Janssen Septet, Arcado String Trio, Trio Clusone with Michael Moore and Han Bennink, Misha Mengelberg's Instant Composers Pool, Gerry Hemingway Quintet, Amsterdam String Trio, trio with pianist Georg Graewe and percussionist Gerry Hemingway, trio with trumpet player Eric Vloeimans and guitarist Anton Goudsmit, duo with pianist Harmen Fraanje and trio with Harmen Fraanje and singer Mola Sylla. In 1985 Reijseger was awarded with the Boy Edgar prize (Dutch prize for jazz and improvised music). In 1995 he received the Bird Award from the North Sea Jazz Festival. Reijseger collaborates with the Sardinian vocal group Tenore e Concordu de Orosei. With them and Senegalese singer Mola Sylla he performs a concert version of the music for the films by Werner Herzog. The title of this performance and the cd is Requiem for a Dying Planet. For the Amsterdamse Cello Biënnale 2010 Reijseger worked with 140 young cellists, who eventually assembled in one orchestra, the Mega Kinder Cello Orkest. On the island La Réunion Reijseger met the group Groove Lélé. This accidental encounter has led to a close friendship and a musical collaboration. They recorded the album Zembrocal Musical (Winter&Winter). The CD Zembrocal Musical received the French prize 'Trophée des Arts Afro Carabiéen' for 'Best album 2010'. Groove Lélé & Reijseger were also nominated for 'Best Group 2010'.

Hervé Sellin

Hervé Sellin was born in 1957 in Paris. While playing trumpet then trombone he started classical piano studies at the "Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris" with Aldo Ciccolini. He obtained, in 1980, a double prize of piano and chamber music. At the same period his father, great French trumpet player Pierre Sellin, introduced him into jazz. So he started playing with great soloists such as: Sonny Grey, Guy Lafitte, Gérard Badini, Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Joe Newman, Eddie "Cleanhead" Vinson, Harry "Sweets" Edison, Art Farmer, Phil Woods, Barney Wilen, Clifford Jordan, James Moody, Chet Baker, Slide Hampton. In 1984, he met Johnny Griffin and played in his European quartet for 15 years. 1986 to 1989: Many concerts, tours, album ("Live in Paris") with singer Dee Dee Bridgewater. 1990: The "French Jazz Academy" awarded him the Django Reinhardt's prize for his activities as pianist, composer and arranger. In 1991, he met Branford Marsalis and recorded with him (Columbia/Sony "Hervé Sellin Sextet featuring Branford Marsalis"). From 1995 to 2000: concerts, tours and three albums with French drummer/composer Bertrand Renaudin. 2001: Piano Solo album recorded "live" at the Bayonne Jazz Festival (France) "Thèmes et variations". 2002: At the Marciac Jazz Festival (France), "25th anniversary" Suite for ten musicians composed, arranged by Hervé Sellin. From 2003 to 2007: Hervé Sellin plays with French accordionist Richard Galliano and string quintet: "Piazzolla For Ever", the tango music from Astor Piazzolla Concerts, tours, CD (2003 – Dreyfus Jazz), DVD (2006). October 2003: Invited by Wynton Marsalis to play two concerts at The Lincoln Center of New York with his tentet. Released in 2008: Hervé Sellin Tentet "Marciac - New York express" (Cristal Records / Harmonia Mundi). Best French Jazz Album of the Year awarded by the French Jazz Academy. DjangodOr 2009 as "confirmed artist". Selected Discography: Thèmes et variations - piano solo, Jazz aux Remparts/ Night & Day; Acoustic MOP(trio with Bertrand Renaudin) CC Productions/ Harmonia Mundi; L'Arbre voyage (quintet with Bertrand Renaudin) CC Productions/



Harmonia Mundi; Piazzolla for ever (Richard Galliano septet) CD + DVD Dreyfus-Jazz; Hervé Sellin
tentet Marciac - New York Express, Cristal Records / Harmonia Mundi.

Horia Maxim

Considered as one of the best pianists of his generation, Horia Maxim (born in 1971, in the city of Galați) is a musician with a constant career that represents one of the most important references of Romanian artistic talent. The high level of his performances is proved in approaching a complex and vast repertoire both as soloist of the main Romanian orchestras (in more than 500 concerts) and as chamber music partner of important artists in recitals which took place in Germany, France, Italy, Austria, Japan and Romania. Horia Maxim has been invited to various international music festivals such as: "George Enescu Festival" (Bucharest, Romania), "Europäische Wochen Festspiele" (Passau, Germany) "Nuova Consonanza" (Rome, Italy), "Icon Arts Festival" (Sibiu, Romania), "Bucharest Music Film Festival" and "International Week for the Contemporary Music" (Bucharest, Romania). Among his CD recordings, there are also several first auditions (e. g. "Concert hymne" for piano and orchestra by Liviu Dăncăanu). In addition, Horia Maxim took part in the recording of the "Youth without Youth" soundtrack, movie produced and directed by Francis Ford Coppola in 2007. Also this pianist is a founding member (2011) of Maxim Quartet. Horia Maxim begun to study piano in the "George Enescu" Music High School in Bucharest, being mentored by the brilliant teacher Mircea Costache. During his studies at Bucharest National University of Music, Horia Maxim has been mostly influenced by the exceptional personalities of Dan Grigore and Delia Pavlovici. In parallel with the soloist career, Horia Maxim is enjoying a fruitful didactical path at the Bucharest National University of Music (since 1996). Following this side of his career, he was invited many times in the juries of important national and international piano competitions.



Juan de la Rubia

Juan de la Rubia, born in Valencia in 1982. He studied as organist, pianist and harpsichord player in Valencia, Barcelona, Berlin and Toulouse. His teachers have been Oscar Candendo, Montserrat Torrent, and Michel Bouvard. At the same time, he attended master classes with Daniel Roth, Bernhard Haas, Enrico Viccardi, Wolfgang Zerzer, Olivier Latry and Ton Koopman. After winning the First National Prize of Organ for young musicians in Spain, he started his activity as soloist in the most important halls and Spanish festivals, as well as concerts abroad (Germany, Slovenia, Philippine Islands, France, Guinea, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Czech Republic). He won also another important prizes in Spain (Granada, Santiago de Compostela, Valencia, Barcelona). Specialized in improvisation, he studied with Emilio Molina and Wolfgang Seifen in Barcelona and Berlin, and he frequently plays improvisations during his concerts. He has played with different orchestras and choirs like "Camerata de Madrid", Choir and Orchestra of Valencia, National Orchestra of Andorra, Royal Orchestra of Galicia, Berlin Kammerorchester Carl Phillip



Emanuel Bach, with the conductors Lorin Maazel, Frédéric Chaslin, Yaron Traub, Salvador Mas, Maximino Zumalave, etc. Since 2005 he is teacher at ESMUC (High School of Music of Catalonia), where he alternates his teacher's work and concert playing, and he is also the organist at Sagrada Familia in Barcelona.

Karst de Jong

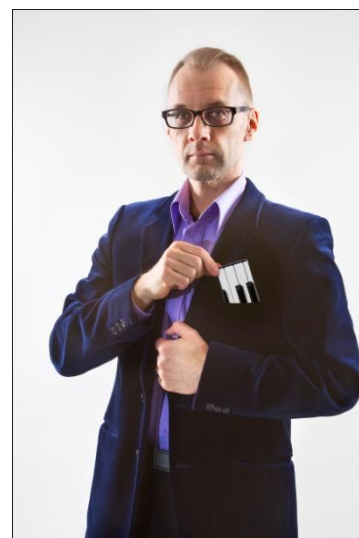
Karst de Jong (1961) studied classical Piano and Music Theory at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. Shortly after completing his studies, he was appointed as a professor of music theoretical subjects at the Conservatory of Amsterdam and the Royal Conservatory of The Hague. He specialized in piano improvisation and the relation between analysis and interpretation of the piano literature. Since 2003 he has been appointed professor of improvisation and composition-techniques at the ESMUC (Escola Superior de Musica de Catalunya) in Barcelona. He regularly gives concerts with classical and jazz improvisations, both as a soloist and with different instrumental combinations. He has performed concerts in various countries in Europe and Japan. He published articles on improvisation and music theory and appeared at numerous conferences. He is a cofounder of the Dutch Belgian society of Music Theory and editor of the Dutch Journal of Music Theory.

Karst de Jong has taught many master classes of improvisation at internationally renowned festivals, among them the International Chamber Music Festival Schiermonnikoog (2008 and 2009), The Piano Pic festival in the French Pyrenees (2009 and 2011), the Paul Badura-Skoda Music Festival in Vilaseca, Spain (2011) and the Gümüslük classical music festival in Turkey (2012). He recently released his first CD with solo-piano improvisations. Karst de Jong currently lives in Barcelona.



Max Tabell

Max Tabell is a lecturer in pop/jazz piano and the head of the music education department at the Sibelius Academy. He graduated from the Sibelius Academy jazz music department as a jazz pianist and has a long career as a pedagogue and as a pianist and keyboardist in many popular pop/rock- and jazz groups in Finland. He has released 4 CDs with his own group Bitter Sweet (www.myspace.com/bittersweetfi) and appears as a side man in several recordings. He has written a jazz theory book *Jazzmusiik in Harmonia*, *Harmony in Jazz music* (University Press 2004) and created a web site about improvisation in jazz and popular music (www.siba.fi/afroimpro). In recent years Max has developed methods to teach improvisation for beginners and classical musicians with little or no previous experience in improvisation by applying methods of learning to improvise traditionally used by jazz and popular music professionals. He has also absorbed methods originally developed for theatre improvisation into his pedagogical approach. Max is a sought after educator in Finnish music institutions.



Mona Julsrud

Mona Julsrud is one of Norway's leading concert singers. Her repertoire spans from early baroque to contemporary music. She sings regularly with orchestras at home and abroad, and is a frequent guest at chamber music festivals. Mona has worked with conductors such as Frans Brüggen, Philippe Herreweghe, Roy Goodman and Fabio Biondi. She has recorded Bach's St. Matthew passion and Mozart's Requiem with Brüggen and the Orchestra of the 18th Century, and Handel's Jephtha with Fabio Biondi and Stavanger Symphony Orchestra. With Bergen Barokk, Mona is currently working on a complete recording of Telemann's Harmonischer Gottes-Dienst, a series which so far has been received with much praise from the media. She has also recorded music by Scandinavian contemporary composers. Mona studied at the Norwegian Academy of Music and at the Opera School at the Royal College of Music in London. She is currently Associate Professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music.



Noam Sivan

Pianist, composer, improviser, conductor, and interdisciplinary artist, Noam Sivan (1978) has been featured throughout North America, Europe, and Asia, in venues including Carnegie Hall's Zankel Hall, Ravinia Festival, Salle Cortot in Paris, Zipper Hall in Los Angeles, Royal Conservatory in Brussels, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Chicago Cultural Center, Scotia Festival in Canada, Jerusalem Theater, and Tel Aviv Museum. He has premiered his own piano concerto in the triple role of soloist, conductor, and composer. He also performed the Asian premiere of the Viktor Ullmann piano concerto with the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, and Bach's Goldberg Variations encored by his live improvisation on the piece for a broadcast on Israeli national TV. His solo recital series *Chopin and Improvisations* has won high praise: "Tonight we were treated to an exceptional piano recital by one of the brightest stars in the constellation of young world-class pianists." With over 40 compositions to his credit, his music includes operas, scores for ballet and dance, vocal music, orchestral and chamber works. Those have been performed by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the New York City Ballet's Choreographic Institute, and Mannes Opera; broadcast on over 50 radio stations in North America and elsewhere; and recorded for Koch and Bridge labels. A notable pioneer in the revival of improvisation in the classical music world, Noam Sivan is on the faculties of the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, the Juilliard School, and Mannes College in New York, where he founded improvisation workshops and produced all-improvisation concerts, including the first-ever such concert in the long history of the Curtis Institute. He has improvised in concerts as solo pianist; conductor of orchestral improvisations; and in multidisciplinary improvisations with musicians, dancers, and actors. He holds a doctorate from the Juilliard School, having written his doctoral dissertation on improvisation. His teachers have included Milton Babbitt, Carl Schachter, Edward Aldwell, Robert Cuckson, and Richard Goode. www.noamsivan.com



Paul Dinneweth

Paul Dinneweth completed his studies (organ, piano, singing, Music history, fugue, choral and orchestral conducting, improvisation) at the Lemmens Institute and the conservatories of Utrecht and Den Haag. After teaching for many years at several music schools in Flanders, he currently teaches group improvisation, ear training and piano improvisation for music therapists at the Lemmens Institute and conservatories of Antwerp and Brussels. In 1991 he was laureate of the International Improvisation Contest in Knokke-Heist. Since he followed an intensive postgraduate at Guildhall School in London he became more creative in his approach as a teacher and performer. Paul Dinneweth is a freelance organist and workshop leader and he conducts the Chorale Caecilia (Antwerp) and Musica Nova (Boom).

**Richard Barrett**

Richard Barrett, born in Swansea in 1959, studied composition principally with Peter Wiegold. He taught at the Institute of Sonology from 1996 to 2001; during 2001-02 he was a guest of the DAAD Berlin Artists' Programme and between 2006 and 2009 he was a professor of composition at Brunel University in London. In 2009 he rejoined the staff of Sonology. His work encompasses both composition and improvisation, ranging from chamber music to orchestral works, innovative uses of live electronics, and collaborations with installation artists. Much of his work arises from close long-term collaborations, such as his association with the ELISION ensemble (since 1990), Ensemble Champ d'Action (since 1995), the electronic duo FURT with Paul Obermayer (since 1986) and a voice/electronics duo with Ute Wassermann (since 1998). He has also worked as composer and/or performer with numerous ensembles, such as the Arditti, Diotima, Kairos and Pellegrini string quartets, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Ensemble Intercontemporain, Ensemble Modern, KNM Berlin, Klangforum Wien, L'Itinéraire, London Sinfonietta, MusikFabrik, Symphonie-Orchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, and many others. Since 2003 he has been a member of the Evan Parker Electroacoustic Ensemble; in 2005 he and Paul Obermayer formed the vocal/instrumental/electronic octet fORCH. His work as composer and performer is documented on over 20 CDs, including four discs devoted to his compositions and seven by FURT.



Teemu Kide

Teemu Kide is a classical diploma pianist and a performer. He has been working as a teacher in numerous music conservatoires in Finland. Nowadays Kide is focused on the questions such as what are the main issues going on in an improviser's mind and how to make improvising possible for a musician who has never improvised before. As a part of his DMus degree he has developed an improvisation method called the Floating Music. It is a teaching philosophy for musicians of various skill levels. The method is based on fresh harmony thinking, psychoanalytical thinking and flow of rhythmical, stylistically non-idiomatic, associative and free musical expression. Kide has been teaching improvising at the Sibelius Academy since 2010.



Rolf Delfos

Rolf Delfos is saxophonist, composer and arranger. He studied school music, both classical and jazz saxophone at the Royal Conservatoire and Codarts. In the past twenty years he has worked on over 50 CD productions. He collaborated with numerous artists and ensembles at home and abroad. He composed and arranged many pieces for various artists and was the foundation of new ensembles. In recent years he has also been increasingly active as a programmer for various concerts and productions. He is currently employed at the Royal Conservatoire and Artes as teacher saxophone, improvisation and methodology.



Terje Moe Hansen

Violin Professor and composer Terje Moe Hansen's story is just as interesting as his playing and teaching. He started to play at the advanced age of 20, but his progress was spectacular. After three months of study, he auditioned at the State Academy in Oslo, where he was immediately admitted and enrolled as a full time student. Three years after, he was teaching at the same academy. His alternative practicing and teaching methods are creating a stir in ever wider international circles. Upon his soloist debut in Oslo, he was met with long standing ovations, and leading newspaper critics appraised Mr. Moe Hansen for his possession of an exceptionally rich and personal tone, and great musical intelligence combined with a dazzling virtuosity. The next years his recordings, especially of the virtuoso repertoire were met with superlatives. He was invited by the Warner company to presents his innovative ideas in the book, A modern approach to violin virtuosity. For the first time in the history of string playing we were presented with a method where all intervals and shifts were fully explored and systematically trained. The exercises are presented as geometric models made for further personal improvisations. The book became an international door opener for him, and he was invited to leading academies and universities all over the world. He was also presented in the leading magazines like The Strad. Today he attracts



students from all over the world to his class at the Norwegian State Academy in Oslo and master classes throughout Scandinavia, continental Europe and the U.S. His students are in leading positions in the leading orchestras, and many have won first prizes in major international competitions. Terje Moe Hansen is the first man to be active as a professor in Sweden, Denmark and Norway at the same time. The last years his creativity has found new directions. In his compositions for violin solo he has created a whole new university of sounds and extended techniques. He is therefore invited to make courses for professional orchestras and composers. His composition ranks among the most technical advanced music ever written for the violin. His music is based on spectacular technical stunts and a dreamlike poetry. On the YOUTUBE channel there are many examples of his new spectacular ideas and sound palettes. His videos are also the most visited on STRING MAGAZINE video site. In these films he copies the human voice, goes to the cry of the seagull, ending with the sound of a car race with a smile. His creativity seems to be without limits.

Vincent Lê Quang

Saxophonist whose insatiable appetite leads from Jazz to contemporary and classical music, Vincent Lê Quang has a complete musical activity, composing, improvising, conducting and teaching. Fine player of the soprano saxophone, he has developed an immediately recognizable sound and style. He discovered Soundpainting with Walter Thompson in 1999 and soon integrated contributions of this sign language in his creations, always refining the expressive power of each technique employed. Lê Quang is now a member of the Walter Thompson Orchestra, based in New York City. He is regularly invited by ensembles, as well as various musical institutions (Hochschule Luzern, Colburn School in Los Angeles, Paris Conservatoire, Trondheim NTNU ...). He received a commission from the contemporary music ensemble Cairn, piece half written and half composed with Soundpainting called *Saisons*. He plays with musicians like László Fassang, Claude Delangle, Daniel Humair, Jean-Paul Celea in prestigious halls such as the Library of Congress (Washington), the Tchaikovsky Hall (Moscow), Palace of Arts (Budapest) Cité de la Musique (Paris). He is Professor at the Paris Conservatoire (CNSMDP) since 2007.



Who is who – students

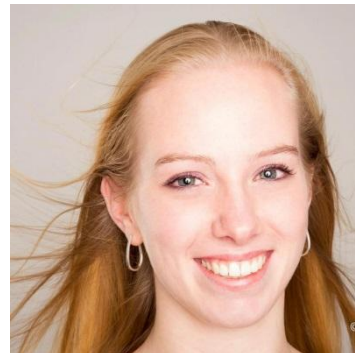
Alexis Bove



Anne Korff de Gidts



Anne Overpelt



Anton Svanberg



Daan van Koppen



Florent Caron



Fra Rustumji



Frederik B. Olsen



Greta Jakobsonaite



Guilherme Piedade



Hugo Loi



Hunter Noak



Indrek Palu



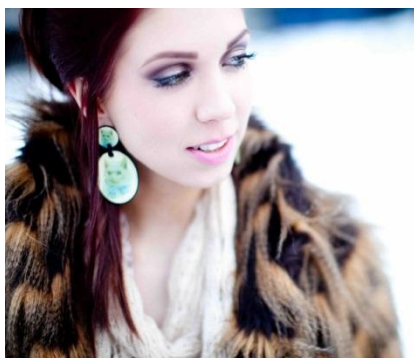
Ingvill Espedal



Juan Miguel Moreno



Laura Põldvere



Lea Fries



Lente Verelst



Maaïke Tromp



Magdalena Petrovich



Marc Jenny



Marte Hansen



Núria Andorrà



Pedro González Fernández



Pieter de Koe



Pijus Jonusas



Radu Grelus



Rogier Tamminga



Ruth Fraser



Sikri Lehko



Sophie Wingland



Stanislav Makovskiy



Stefan Cazacu



Vigdis Elst



Antti Salovaara



Vivienne Liao

